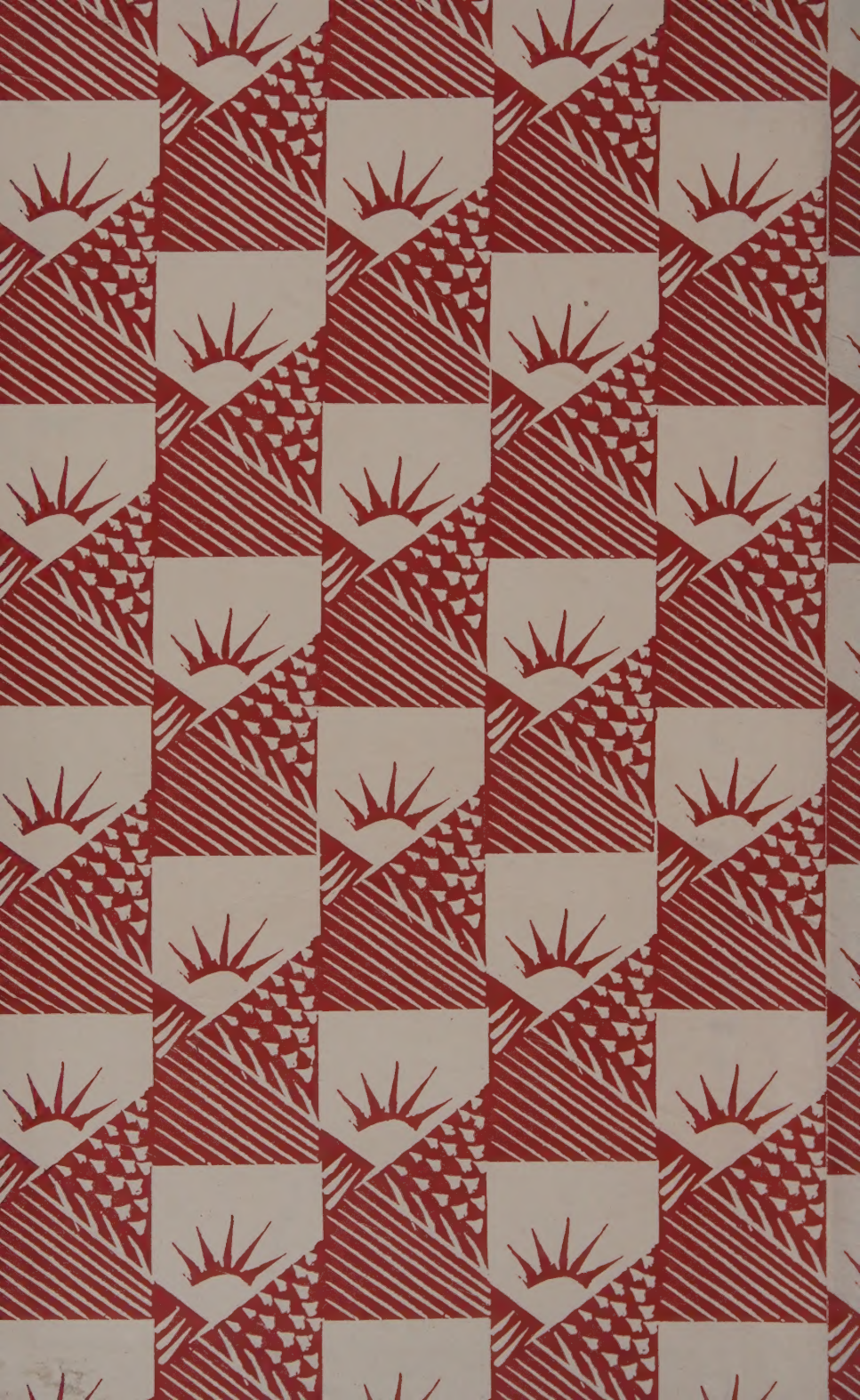

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BY

W. J. V. SAVILLE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI, Ph.D., D.Sc.

Reader in Social Anthropology in the University of London

WITH 58 ILLUSTRATIONS & MAPS

London

Seeley Service & Co. Limited

196 Shaftesbury Avenue

1926

Printed in Great Britain by the
Riverside Press Limited, Edinburgh

TO

E. V. S.

FOREWORD

AS a field-worker, and one acquainted with the districts of New Guinea in which Mr Saville has been conducting his observations, I am in a position to appreciate the excellent anthropological contribution contained in this volume. The difficulty of direct research among savages lies in the rare combination of two elements indispensable to good field-work : intimate personal acquaintance with the people and a good knowledge of the principles of the science of man. Unfortunately the two are seldom united in the same person, for scholarship goes but rarely with the spirit of adventure, nor the dashing push of the pioneer with the calm reflection of the logician. The Conquistadors of the New World were not recruited from Salamanca, nor the circumnavigators of the Cape from Coimbra. And in these latter days the prospector, the borderland trader and the missionary adventurer are usually men of action rather than dispassionate and balanced students of human nature.

We are often inclined to be unfair in demanding scientific research in unknown countries and among strange peoples from men who, as it is often put, have "full opportunities for observation." We might as well ask a diver to make research on hydrostatics, a miner to writ a treatise on geology, or the first man met in the street to do introspective psychology. Training is as necessary in the study of human nature as in that of the inanimate world. And what modern anthropology really needs is relevant observations on subjects of theoretical importance rather than a hotchpotch of impressions, anecdotes and curiosities.

There is no doubt that even among the earliest writers in contact with savage or barbarous peoples there have been excellent anthropologists, to mention only Herodotus, Tacitus, Garcilasso de la Vega, Sahagun, Dobritzhofer, Lafiteau and their later compeers. But the touch of theoretical interest, the development of method, the approach to facts with a developed apparatus of science have transformed

modern anthropological work and made it infinitely more precise, varied and interesting.

The Reverend W. J. V. Saville belongs to the modern type of missionary who has been able to fashion himself into an anthropologist. He has not relied exclusively upon the magic of "the daily contact" with natives, but has resolutely attacked the study of sociological principles, acquired scientific terminology, and has become familiar with anthropological methods. Even when I first came in contact with the writer of the present volume during my stay in Mailu he knew not only a great deal about the natives but also about anthropology. From that time on his theoretical researches continued. During his visit to England Mr Saville followed a comprehensive course of lectures on primitive sociology and economics, delivered by myself at the University of London in the summer term of 1921. From our subsequent correspondence I know that Mr Saville has carried on his training in an extensive study of modern anthropological works. The results will be patent to every reader of this book: in the precise and detailed descriptions of the construction of the house and of the canoe; in the account of village life and of the divisions of the day; in the fascinating reconstruction of warfare, head-hunting and initiation ceremonies; in the vivid pictures he gives us of the native dances and their mysterious rites and ceremonies. The excellent photographs, both artistic and precise, add considerably to the attractiveness and scientific value of the book. The anthropologist will be supplied with rich material for his studies and the layman will follow the narrative with unabated interest. For in a good anthropological account scientific precision and thoroughness do not detract from the popular and literary appeal of the book. Indeed they substantially add to it.

Another merit of the present contribution is its effort at a careful reproduction of the native point of view. In the vivid portrayal of the fears and apprehensions of a Mailu Papuan with regard to sorcery, in the analysis of their extraordinary visions of value and wealth, in the rendering of their leading sociological ideas Mr Saville has given us some excellent pages of analytic anthropology.

Praiseworthy, also, in an amateur contribution, is the

considerable restraint in the use of catch-words and meaningless generalizations, which form the bane of non-specialist writings. Even when we find a word or two used somewhat loosely, the concrete details given in the context explain the author's meaning sufficiently well. We read for instance on page 46 that " there is a communism of the kin, a communism of the clan, and a communism of the community. Each is separate, and within each exists a jealousy which for intensity reaches white-heat." The word " communism " is obviously used here in a manner foreign to economics or anthropology and lacks altogether precision or even meaning. *Communism* cannot co-exist with *jealousy*, and the statement contains a contradiction in terms. From the context, however, we find that the word " communism " covers, within the family, the free and equal sharing of food; within the clan, the exchange of services; within the community, certain forms of co-operation.

Or again take the statement " . . . an individual psychology among them seems so insignificant that it hardly calls for comment. The psychology of our people is a mass or social psychology. An individual mind seems only interpretable in terms of the social organization " (page 266). The statement would be difficult to comprehend if it stood by itself. What Mr Saville means is clear from the context however. From the perusal of the book we learn how deeply the native is influenced by his custom and his tradition. In order to understand what a native thinks and feels, and how he behaves, it is necessary not only to observe individuals and converse with them, but also to study the social organization of the culture of the tribe. These two points Mr Saville is able to establish throughout the extremely interesting descriptions of his book. On the whole hasty generalizations and inaccuracies are absent from this volume, especially if we measure it by other writings of amateur anthropologists.

The value of the book consists to a large extent in the rare union of rich detail with firm outline, of the full flavour of native life which we receive, combined with a good grasp of the underlying scheme of native organization. In this connection I may perhaps be allowed to mention that certain aspects of the sociology, economics and belief of these Papua-Melanesians have been already described in a monograph

on *The Natives of Mailu* (published in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Australia*, 1915, pp. 494-706; with thirty-four illustrations). When soon after its publication I was able, on the beach of Samarai, to present a copy to Mr Saville, I expressed my hopes that he would freely use my essay, incorporate into his own book what he found correct, pull the rest to pieces and remake it into a more perfect version. Mr Saville however, with great restraint and generosity, abstained from publishing anew of those passages and documents which he evidently found correct and to which there was nothing to be added. Thus the student of anthropology will be interested to consult the table of classificatory kinship terms (pp. 535-536) in the earlier monograph, a document which has been omitted from this volume. He will be also interested to find that most of the information on kinship of the previous essay is confirmed by the subsequent research. But in Mr Saville's book the reader will find a much more complete and more "full-blooded" account of kinship relations. Certain subjects, such as the principles of clan and sub-clan organization, the nature of tribal unity and the function of the village community within the tribe will be best studied by a comparison between the two accounts. Certain economic or legal subjects, land tenure, the regulation of public life, the nature of property and inheritance will even gain, perhaps, by a close consultation of the older monograph, in the writing of which, by the way, I received much generous help from Mr Saville, as the reader will see from my numerous acknowledgments. In the chapters on belief and ritual, in the description of mortuary proceedings of sorcery and of white magic, on the other hand, the superiority of the long-time resident becomes obvious. I had not even discovered the existence of initiation, and my data about head-hunting and warfare are scanty. On this subject and in many other places where his intimate acquaintance with the natives and their language allows him to evoke a past which now lives only in the memory of old men, alas, the author gives us some first-rate pages of Melanesian anthropology.

Very interesting are the chapters about trade and value. Owing to the researches of Dr A. C. Haddon, Captain Barton, Professor Seligman and Mr W. E. Armstrong, we know a

great deal about the interesting and complex systems of barter on the south coast of New Guinea. The present writer was able to study, in the northerly groups of the islands, a special type of ceremonial trade, unique in its circular character, in its unceasing flow, in its forms of value and principle of exchange. This was described in the *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1921). Mr Saville's new information supplies another link in the chain, so that now we have a complete picture of the big international trade of these primitive islanders. Considering the importance in present-day anthropology of the contact of races, the diffusion of cultures and of trade routes and probable lines of migration, the geographically extensive and sociologically complete data which we possess about New Guinea will become no doubt a subject of vivid scientific discussion.

It is a great pleasure for me to come once again in contact with the Mailu people, among whom I spent the first half-year of my anthropological field-work, and once more to learn about them a great deal from the present excellent description. I also consider it a great privilege to be once more associated with Mr Saville in the study of a rapidly changing if not disappearing race, whose customs, beliefs and institutions are fortunately preserved now by one who had better opportunities of studying them than any other white man alive. The anthropologists of to-day and of to-morrow will be grateful to Mr Saville, and the general reader will find his book a fascinating and instructive revelation of the true nature of some of those of our fellow-men whom we have so crudely misnamed "savage."

B. Malinowski.

Department of Ethnology,
The London School of Economics
(University of London).
November 1925.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

INTRODUCTORY 17

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL DIVISIONS 23

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS 30

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS (*continued*) 37

CHAPTER V

KINSHIP 46

CHAPTER VI

DAILY LIFE 53

CHAPTER VII

VILLAGE LIFE 66

CHAPTER VIII

VILLAGE LIFE (*continued*) 76

CHAPTER IX

FOOD 86

CHAPTER X

CHILDBIRTH & CHILDHOOD 95

CHAPTER XI

INITIATION 104

CHAPTER XII

CANOES & CANOE-BUILDING 111

CHAPTER XIII

DOUBLE HEAVY TYPE SAILING CANOES . . . 120

CHAPTER XIV

DOUBLE SAILING CANOES 130

CHAPTER XV

MAILU POTTERS & THEIR POTTERY 143

CHAPTER XVI

ARMSHELLS & ARMSHELL-MAKING 152

PAGE

CHAPTER XVII

TRADE, TRADE ARTICLES & TRADE ROUTES . . 161

CHAPTER XVIII

PROPERTY 168

CHAPTER XIX

HUNTING & FISHING 176

CHAPTER XX

A MISCELLANY 191

CHAPTER XXI

WARFARE 199

CHAPTER XXII

SICKNESS & DEATH 214

CHAPTER XXIII

BURIAL & MOURNING 222

CHAPTER XXIV

OTHER FORMS OF BURIAL 235

CHAPTER XXV

MORTUARY FEASTS & RITES 238

CHAPTER XXVI

PREPARATIONS FOR THE *GOVI* FESTIVAL . . . 246

CHAPTER XXVII

THE *GOVI* FESTIVAL 253

CHAPTER XXVIII

MAGIC & SPELLS 266

CHAPTER XXIX

TABU 276

CHAPTER XXX

DREAMS & SPIRITS 283

CHAPTER XXXI

RELIGION 293

CHAPTER XXXII

SOME TRIPS INLAND AMONG THE DIMUGA & SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES 297

INDEX 313

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Two Warriors . . . . . *Frontispiece*

PAGE

A Mailu Island Village 31

Canoes at Mailu Island 32

The First Canoes to get away on a Trip to Aroma . . 33

A Gebo Canoe 33

Native Tools 41

Types.—1. A Dimuga Man 48

2. A Mailu Sorcerer 48

3. An Old Murderer 48

4. A Mourner 48

A Mailu Village 56

Leko Dance at a *Govi* Festival 57

Leko Dancer on a ceremonially erected Platform . . 57

A Young Navigator 72

A Woman in Half-Mourning 72

Re-assembling & Re-tying Canoes 73

Wooden Bowls & Hair Combs 84

Part of a Mailu Village 88

Stone Age Tool in use To-day 90

Trough near Water for kneading Sago-Flour from Pith . . 92

Incoming Tide over a Coral Reef 96

A Ceremonial Goari Dancer 96

Larima Dug-out 113

Nowo Basket, Lime Spatula & Gourd for Lime . . 121

Orou, or Double Heavy Sailing Canoe 131

PAGE

A Native Drill 132
A Sail in the making 136
Mailu Island 136
A Village Group 136
Giving the Pig her Evening Meal 137
Head-Shaving & Chiropody 137
Mailu Pottery 145
" " 149
Pattern for the Decoration of Pots 150
Pattern on Native Pottery 151
Skirt-Making from Coconut Leaves 168
Bringing in Firewood & Garden Produce . . . 168
Leather-Jacket Fish 180
Men driving Fish 181
A *Waona* 184
Boy on Coral Reef spearing Fish with Bow & Arrow . . 185
Ceremonial Cooking by Men only 185
Gubina, or Master Float 190
An Old Man sorting out his Catch of Fish . . . 192
Grinding down an Armshell 192
Finishing Touches 200
Pot-Making 200
Spears 202
Kekemo, Boraa Maa, Toru 203
Carving the Under-Surface of House-Flooring Planks . . 208
Woman making a Skirt from Coconut Leaves . . 208
Mailu Drums 212
A Mountain Village 216
Papuan Boats 224
Spearing Fish on the Edge of the Reef 225
Hoisting the "Crab Claw" Sail 225

PAGE

A Mailu Village Scene 240

House Ornamentation in a Mailu Village . . . 256

Native Women's Skirts 256

A *Damorea* entering a Village 257

Women Dancers for the *Damorea* 257

IN
UNKNOWN NEW GUINEA

CHAPTER I

Introductory

Races & Geographical Features

ALL the natives of the whole island of New Guinea have been described by Dr Seligman, the eminent anthropologist, as Papuasians. The more western Papuasians he calls Papuans, "a congeries of frizzly-haired, and often mop-headed, peoples, whose skin colour is some shade of brownish black. The eastern Papuasians—that is, the generally smaller, lighter-coloured, frizzly-haired races of the eastern peninsula of New Guinea and its archipelagos—now require a name, and since the true Melanesian element is dominant in them, they may be called Papuo-Melanesians." Considering them from physical and cultural points of view, he divides these again into Eastern and Western Papuo-Melanesians. To the former (the eastern) he gives a special name, the Massim, and these he divides again into Northern and Southern Massim.

Speaking only of the coast-line, it seems as though there is a clear geographical line of demarcation between Papuans and Western Papuo-Melanesians at Cape Possession, on the south coast of British New Guinea; and that these latter, coming into the country in different hordes, have driven the Papuan aboriginals westward or into the fastnesses of the mountains.

Dr Seligman says: "Very little is known concerning the population of the country between Aroma and Mullens Harbour, in the neighbourhood of which the territory of the Massim begins; in fact this is one of the least-known portions of British New Guinea."

This is the particular piece of the coast with which we are now concerned, and the native population of the greater part of this area is the immediate subject of our present

study. These natives are commonly spoken of as the Mailu people, but among themselves and their near relatives they are also called the *Magi*. The name Mailu has come to be applied to the whole of the tribe and their territory, perhaps because the community living on the small island bearing that name is the largest and most influential in the district. The Mailu-speaking people are the most eastern of the Western Papuo-Melanesians. Being great travellers and traders, they bear strong traces of the overlap of culture from their eastern Massim neighbours.

They have been the middlemen and distributors of the products of Massim culture, as will be shown when we come to consider the trade and trade routes of the Mailu.

Roughly speaking, the confines of their territory are Cape Rodney on the west and a point in the middle of Orangerie Bay on the east. Without allowing for bays and inlets, their coast-line measures about a hundred miles. Along the whole of this coast-line the Mailu language is spoken, with slight variations in places.

At the western boundary, the River Domu, near Cape Rodney, the parallel ranges of hills, rising up to the main Mount Owen Stanley range, stand some distance back, and leave a wide belt of rich alluvial soil. In Cloudy Bay, more to the east, the hills start just behind a strip of mangrove shore. The hills stand farther back again behind the shores of Baxter Bay, leaving a wide belt of alternate swamps and alluvial soil. Great patches of sago swamp country are found both on these flats and in the valleys behind the more coastal hills. Baxter Bay is closed on the east by Batumata or Table Point. The native name indicates the point on which the edible root of a vine (*batu*) is found in abundance. The British name is taken from a flat table-like hill, which stands some distance back from the point. Table Point is the western boundary of Table Bay, twenty miles across. The hills stand back some distance from the shores of the bay, and the country between is very low, and contains innumerable swamps and great areas of sago forest. Goibomata (Stonypoint) is the eastern boundary of Table Bay and the western boundary of Amazon Bay. Within this latter bay the Mailu peoples carry on most of their activities, and it is the most densely populated piece of their territory.

Along the western half of its shores runs a stretch of firm sand beach, until a point is reached where the hills rise abruptly from the water's edge. Smaller bays run back, bounded on all sides by high hills which come right down to the white sandy beaches. In from the shore the coast ranges are succeeded one after another by still higher ranges, all running parallel to one another. No undulating country can be seen; the mountains culminate in razor-like ridges; deep gorges break the ranges in many places; here precipitous slopes, there silvery streaks indicating small mountain streams and falls; here a sugar-loaf peak, there a straight-lined ridge; behind all this the high mountains of the Mount Owen Stanley, the backbone of the country, stand out in their grey, blue or purple splendour. Even at their distance of twenty-five or thirty miles from the coast you can easily see the wealthy clothing of dense tropical vegetation which covers most of them, even at their summits. Such are Mounts Suckling, Dayman (bare of trees along its arc-like ridge) and Simpson; these three are the great silent inland sentinels of the country where the Mailu tongue prevails. From the sea it is a picture of indescribable beauty. In the foreground the high coast hills are broken up into four fiords: beautiful harbours of still, dark blue water, encircled with shore reefs and stretches of white sand. Such are, coming eastwards, Ebu Bay and Mayrie Bay in Amazon Bay, and Millport Harbour and Port Glasgow just beyond. In the immediate foreground, still in Amazon Bay, are the two coral islands of Loupomu and Laruoro, with their individual encircling coral reefs and lagoons, and farther to seaward the higher island of Mailu, the metropolis of the *Magi* man and the seaward sentinel of his territory.

This small island is volcanic, and rises about five hundred feet above the sea. It consists of sharp razor-backed ridges radiating from one central point to each corner of the island. There is little or no vegetation apart from rank tall sword-grass on the steep sides of the ridges. Round the foreshores and in the gullies are numerous coconut-palms and other economic trees and plants, with a few forest trees.

Except at the corners, where the ridges abruptly enter the water, there is an encircling coral shore reef, protecting the island from the full force and weight of the Pacific swell.

Such is the isolated, grim, hungry island of Mailu, standing and watching each movement of the restless sea banging against its sides, or looking to the north in wonder and awe at the still, gruesome mountain ranges of the mainland.

After leaving Mailu Island there is an island or two, then round the high perpendicular corner of Port Glasgow we enter Orangerie Bay, with its flat, unprotected foreshore and soft sandy beach, pounded with deafening and relentless force by the swells of the ocean.

Half-way along the shores of this bay we reach the boundary of the Mailu-speaking tribe. Their last eastern village proper is Gogosiba, and six miles farther on is the first Massim village, half of which is peopled by some Mailu-speaking people who married there after escaping from their own village of Laruoro when attacked by the Mailu Island people. But that story must come later on (p. 206).

The rivers along the Mailu coast-line are only small; few are navigable for more than six or eight miles, and then only for small boats of shallow draught. But coming as they do from high mountains comparatively near the coast, these streams are very swift.

A much more important physical feature of the coast, in its bearing on the lives of the native communities, is the coral reef. Of this there are two forms along the Mailu coast. Round nearly all the foreshore is the "fringing" reef. This solid shelf not only affords to the shore, village or native community a wonderful protection from the ocean swell and current, but countless things of economic value are found upon it, and the native is not slow to avail himself of them. Indeed this form of reef, as well as the "barrier" formation, is of such economic importance to the Mailu man, and of such intrinsic interest in itself, that we must describe it in more detail later on. The "barrier" or "low breakwater" formation starts about the middle of Table Bay, and with breaks, openings or passages here and there continues westwards very nearly as far as the Great Gulf of Papua. It lies at distances varying from a quarter of a mile to five or more miles from the shore. Within the barrier is a sheet of water entirely free from ocean swell, ensuring a smooth-water passage along parts of the coast for quite big vessels.

The Mailu man's territory does not seem to have provided him with the stone from which he could make the harder stone implements for tree-felling, canoe-adzing and house-building. In such heavy work he depended on polished stone axes and adzes, and to procure them he bartered other native trade goods with his Massim and inland neighbours. But from Abau Island in Cloudy Bay he got the stone from which he himself made, and makes to-day, the rough chipped implements for less important work.

Some time ago I discovered on Abau Island boulders bearing strange markings which I had heard described in a folk-story, which I will relate in another place. The boulders have evidently been the grindstones for generations, and the markings take exactly the shape of the stone axes and adzes, and of the nose ornaments worn by the natives and ground down from shells. These markings may only indicate the spot where the imported stone tools were re-sharpened, and do not necessarily mean that the tools were originally made there.

Clay is found on Mailu Island, and the natives of that community are the only potters now in the district. I say "now," because inland from the shores of Amazon Bay I have found bits of pottery bearing different patterns from those of the Mailu. And the Mailu man tells me that long ago there were people living there who were potters, but that he "finished them off." Perhaps he wanted the pot monopoly, as well as their skulls.

The forests on the mainland abound in all kinds of hard, medium or soft woods for economic purposes — house-building, canoe-making, weapons for warfare or defence, garden-fencing or ceremonial appliances. Long trailing vines and canes and fibre-bearing trees provide him with all the material he requires for binding, tying or making nets. He can get rushes from the river banks from which he plaits mats either for the home or for the sails of his great sailing canoe. Similarly, the innumerable palm leaves provide him with an endless supply of roofing and wall materials for his houses. In these same forests he has scope for hunting; and at certain seasons the shallow water over the coral reef teems with fish, to say nothing of the crustaceans found there at low water.

Bird life is prolific, and supplies the bushman with food in the shape of flesh and eggs, and from the gorgeous plumage of some of the birds he gets the decorations with which he adorns himself on all ceremonial occasions.

Wild animals are not very plentiful in the forests. There are wild pigs, wallabies, the cuscus, bandicoots and numerous species of marsupials. Reptiles abound, and alligators infest the rivers. There is little that he cannot make use of, as providing for some known want.

Such is a brief description of the Mailu man's territory. It is now our duty to turn more directly to the man himself, and in doing so we shall have ample opportunity for enlarging upon the things so lightly touched on here, but which mean so much to the make-up of the man, his social organisation, or his tribal life.

CHAPTER II

Social Divisions

The Tribe—Village Community—Household

MY old native informant hands on the tradition of his forbears that at one time the Mailu-speaking people were all one, without the dissensions which have separated their interests within comparatively recent years. Whether the tradition is true or false, to-day at any rate no social solidarity binds them together. There are certain elements, however, which compel us to consider them as a tribe, although no practical unity exists among them.

These elements are their geographical contiguity and confines; their language, differing only slightly in certain districts; their "distinct cultural unity"; and the identity of their social institutions. If I may be allowed to theorise, I should submit that probably some or all of the following have contributed towards the breaking up of the tribe into confederacies of two villages or more: (1) dates of migratory arrival at somewhere about their present geographical spheres—my oldest informants have told me of the tribe having come by different routes and at different times from their more eastern habitat; (2) intermarriage of some of the tribe with people (probably conquered) of country newly adopted; (3) difficulty of settling sites, and formation of food groups; (4) a naturally jealous and quarrelsome disposition; (5) the fact that the tribe migrated hitherward in sections.

When I first came among these people, they might have been roughly classed as island dwellers, hill-top dwellers and river-mouth dwellers. These again could be subdivided under each main head into village confederacies, the villages within the confederacy being on permanently good terms with one another, but at enmity with other confederacies, except on occasion when they united against a common foe.

Let us look with the aid of the map at these groups and

confederacies. Of the island group the largest and by far the most influential is the community on Mailu Island, four and a half miles from the nearest point of the mainland. This community was always on good terms with the most western section of the tribe—namely, the Domu villages on the Domu river at Cape Rodney, the Domara community living on the river of that name in Cloudy Bay, Burumai on the Cape of that name (now abandoned owing to depredations made on them by inland people, and joined up with Domara), a few small villages on the rivers in Cloudy Bay, Oraedo or Boru community in Baxter Bay, and Kurere in Amazon Bay. These last two are recent settlements of people from Mailu Island. At enmity with this large but scattered group was the group consisting of the communities on the two coral islands, Laruoro and Loupomu in Amazon Bay, with the closely related communities in the middle of Table Bay and at Table Point. At one time the Laruoro community was entirely banished and their village burned down, and they went and stayed for many years at the first Massim village in Orangerie Bay, Gadaisu, where many of them married and still reside. The other half eventually returned to Laruoro; but even to-day there is practically no intermarriage between them and the Mailu Island community.

Next we come to the hilltop-dwelling confederacies at the western end of Amazon Bay, the Woworo and the Delebai villages. They were always on friendly terms with the community on Mailu Island, but there has never yet been any intermarriage. I can only account for the friendly relations by supposing that Mailu made friends of the mammon of unrighteousness because it could provide a ready food market. But the Delebai confederacy fought bitterly with the Maisioro hill group, consisting of Dagobo and Unevi. These latter were so often linked with the next group, consisting of Borebo and the Millport Harbour villages, that Mailu dubbed them all "Maisi," and in a contemptuous way dub them so to-day. Next came the Banoro confederacy, consisting of Banoro, Geagea, Boraea and Gema. All these hill-dwellers lived in the least accessible places upon the precipitous tops of the coast hills, and were continually waging war against their neighbouring confederacies.

After turning the corner of Port Glasgow, and entering Orangerie Bay, there are the four Mailu-speaking villages of Oibada, Nabai, Ori and Gogosiba, all situated in the open at the mouths of rivers, and, like the river-mouth dwellers in Table Bay, sufficiently protected by their uninviting, unlandable shore. The Orangerie Bay group shows more than any other the overlap of Massim culture. Behind the first of the Orangerie Bay group, hidden from the sea on the top of a rocky hill, surrounded by sago swamp on three sides and the Oibada river on the fourth, is Ilai village. It was at one time a large community, and of more distinctly Mailu type than their neighbours on the shore. This community and that of Gema are the only two still occupying their ancient high fastnesses. The others have all come down in my time on to the shores of the beautiful bays, and split up into smaller communities representing one or more clans. The old need for confederacy and grouping for purposes of defence or offence no longer exists. All the villages west of Mailu Island, including the coral-island group, speak the Mailu language as spoken on the former island, except for variations in brogue—as a Sussex man might differ from a Lincolnshire man, or Somerset from Warwickshire. The hill groups and the Orangerie Bay group, besides possessing a distinct brogue, vary the stem endings of the verb, although they attach the same personal suffixes to those endings. The vocabulary varies very little throughout the tribe.

Before going on to describe the next and most important social division of the Mailu people, I wish to give the reader a kind of general introduction to the Mailu man and his neighbours. I shall take the Mailu islander as, I think, the purest type in the Mailu-speaking tribe.

The men are generally of medium stature, 5 ft. 3 in. to 5 ft. 6 in. or 5 ft. 8 in. in height. They are mostly lean and bony, but fairly well formed, sometimes very well. The arms are on the long side and the muscles of the legs not too well developed. This may perhaps result from sitting too much in canoes. The skin is light to dark brown in colour. The man has a pronouncedly upright bearing and carriage, and a characteristic, dignified, almost conceited, manner of walking, as though the years had taught him to overcome any ugly shambling gait which his soft sand

might have begotten, by adopting a posture as erect as possible, and stiffening the knees and joints. He is recognized nearly anywhere by this. His head is covered with a great mop of teased-out frizzly hair of dark brown colour, standing out all round his head like a halo.

His features are quite good and regular. He is a handsome man, as Papuasians go. But do not tell him so. His forehead is high and upright and his head fairly rounded. His nose is generally long and prominent, but slightly depressed and broadened at the end; the nostrils are not markedly large, nor are his lips extraordinarily thick or prominent. His eyebrows are prominent, his eyes are set back in his head, and he has high cheek-bones. The septum of his nose is pierced and dependent. His ears lie well back against his head, and the lobes are pierced and enlarged and hang down. His general appearance is lanky and lean, rather than round and stocky.

On first acquaintance his facial expression — if he is wearing any just then, for he has a marvellous ability of obliterating all expression from his face on occasion—is not pleasing. It is distrustful, hard, suspicious, dissatisfied and quarrelsome.

His dress, or undress, I shall describe later under "Daily Life" (p. 53).

The woman is smaller than the man. Her hair is shorter, but this is not the place to describe how she wears it. She is usually of slight build. Her hands and feet are small, and her arms and shoulders well rounded. As a rule her features are well formed. When young she is quite good-looking, but when old, very wizened. She is tattooed, but not so her mate. Her carriage, like the man's, is upright and dignified. Her cast of countenance is much like that of the man, perhaps more sullen and defiant, and she gives one the impression that she is well able to hold her own. Her skin colour is the same as that of the men.

Both men and women are very noisy, and talk as if the sea were always making a great row, and they must shout to make themselves heard, and the woman's voice is pitched in a high nasal key.

The little children, both male and female, are generally very pretty. Their hair is often quite fair and curly, and

their skin colour much lighter than that of adults. They are well formed except for want of roundness about the lower limbs and a length of arm that sometimes looks out of proportion. Their general expression on first acquaintance is timid, wondering and inquisitive.

This is only a quick description of the Mailu family.

Their neighbours on the west are the Aroma people, with whom they seem always to have been on good terms and to have done extensive trading. The Aroma man rather closely resembles the Mailu man in appearance, and has the same strong, characteristic type of features, though his expression always struck me as being even harder. His skin colour is rather darker, and his hair, instead of being frizzed, is more wavy and lank. His natural dress, the perineal band or cord, is the same as that of the Mailu man; and that of the women's a dress of skirts, made from young coconut fronds, is also the same. Their villages and houses also resemble the Mailu types.

Some of the Aroma village communities live over the water. The houses rest on long piles sunk into the sand or broken coral. Such communities do not seem to possess land and are the great fishermen of that district, bartering their fish for vegetables with the proprietors of land. Judging from what my Mailu informants have told me I should say that, although the Aroma people possess the same clan system and reckon descent through the father, their social institutions differ considerably from the Mailu. These Aroma people are important to the Mailu as forming the next close link in the chain of culture-distribution along the coast through the Papuo-Melanesians, and eventually from them to the Papuan tribes of the Gulf. The Mailu men, who can, most of them, speak the Aroma dialect, tell me that the two languages are distinctly different.

The Mailu people differ much more from their eastern neighbours, the Southern Massim, than they do from their western neighbours, and this in spite of the fact that they have been far more influenced culturally, and are in closer geographical contiguity, and in more frequent intercourse with their eastern neighbours than with their western. The culture influence has been superficial, material and artistic. The inbred conservative adherence to custom bars any

drastic alteration in social institutions, in which the Mailu differ so much from the Southern Massim.

Instead of closely compact communities, as among the former, you have among the latter a community dwelling in scattered hamlets. Instead of unwieldy heavy mass movement you have the more alert individualism. Instead of patrilineal clan and patrilocal marriage systems, among the Southern Massim there are matrilineal and matrilocal marriage systems, strongly marked.

The Southern Massim are fairer, shorter and stockier, very well formed and developed, with shorter, closer, woollier hair. Instead of the perineal cord the men wear a perineal band of broad leaf, drawn between the legs and attached fore and aft to a belt. The women wear the same coconut-leaf skirts, but much shorter. The language, both in vocabulary and construction, is entirely different from the Mailu, and is built up on an entirely different plan. The former is vowelic and the latter consonantal.

The last neighbours to be mentioned are the people in the hinterland behind the coast range, opposite Mailu Island and behind Amazon Bay, the Dimuga, sometimes called after the name of their metropolis, Udama. They are Papuans. They are a broad-featured, bony-limbed, virile, short woolly-haired, broad-footed, mountain-dwelling people. They are darker skinned, varying from dark brown to brownish black. They have shorter, broader noses, with a greater thickening of the lips. Their villages consist of several long low communal dwelling-houses of comparatively rude construction, gathered round one or more ceremonial club-houses for the men, built on a different and more imposing plan. We shall visit many of their villages and have more to say of these interesting folk. There has been constant intercourse between the nearest of them and the hill-dwelling coastal Mailu men, who traded and even intermarried with them. There are few practical signs of overlap of culture. The Dimuga traded with feathers, food and netted bags, in exchange for shell ornaments, pottery, coco-nuts and salt-waterlogged wood. One of their dances has found great favour among the Mailu.

The language, which in no way resembles the Mailu, is

spoken very rapidly and consists of many monosyllabic words which begin and end with consonants. The more western Mailu have had much less to do with their inland neighbours than those who live nearer the metropolis. Let us get a little closer to these latter in their village communities. We will choose as our type the hub of their universe —Mailu Island.

CHAPTER III

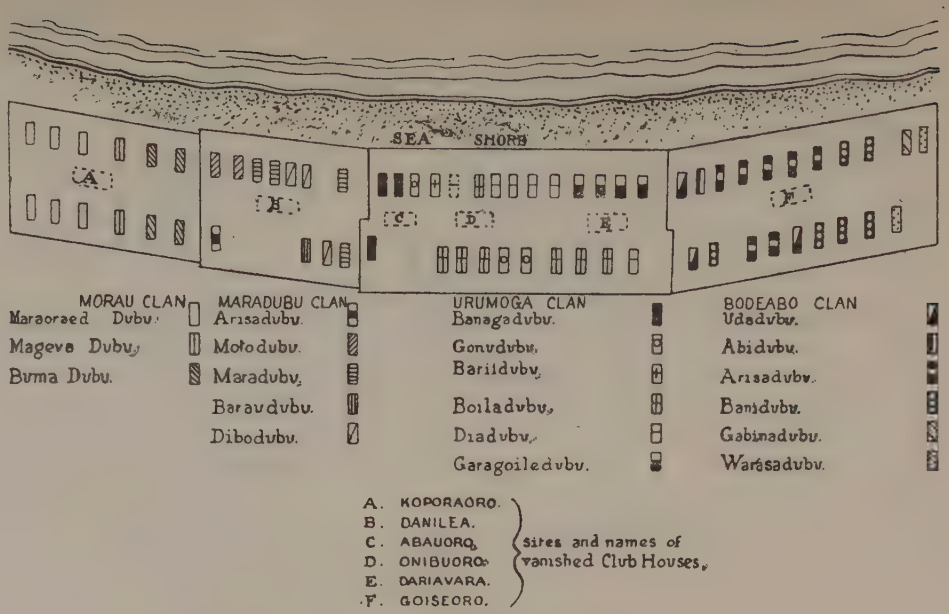
Social Institutions

Village Community—Clan & Sub-Clan—Household

THE Village Community.—The first thing that strikes one upon entering a Mailu village is its orderly arrangement. The villages are built on one distinct and characteristic plan. Two rows of houses, running parallel to one another, take the curve, if any, of high-water mark on the shore. Between high water and the seaward row of houses there is an open space of sandy beach, twenty to thirty yards wide.

In front the houses look on to a broad, hard, unencumbered street. At their sides there is hardly space enough to walk between them except by stooping under the overhanging eaves. They are raised up from the ground on high piles; the eaves are clean cut and at a uniform height from the ground, giving a neat appearance to the whole. There is no shade in the village street to protect one from the humid, sweltering heat. One looks in vain, unless the sun's rays at the time are very slanting, for a bit of shade cast by tree or palm. I have never seen a shady Mailu-speaking village. Spaces around the village on all sides, and the street itself, are kept clear and clean, except when ceremonially, most unceremoniously, unclean.

No weeds or grass have any chance to grow in the immediate precincts of the village. The street is generally regarded as a public highway. Some forms of work are done in the street—for example, the big canoe sails are always laid down, pegged out and sewn there. Rope-making is also carried on in the space afforded by the long street, and if the houses should be casting any shade, women will sometimes sit down in the street and do their pottery or basket-making; generally, however, they prefer to do this work upon their verandahs. The street is also used on all ceremonial occasions, such as ceremonial cooking, dancing, distributing the shares of food at the feasts, and special funeral rites. The



MAILU ISLAND VILLAGE

Showing the dispositions of the four clans and their subdivisions

verandahs of the houses then afford good vantage points for onlookers. The axis of each house is perpendicular to the line of the street; but in the old days other highly important buildings were erected at certain places in the middle of the street and running parallel with it. These were the club-houses of the men, the *dubus*—one and sometimes two to a clan. They were built on a different plan from the other houses and will be described later on. Temporary dwellings are also erected near all Mailu villages to shelter the very sick or feeble, and at the seasons when the big houses are too hot at night the people sleep in such temporary huts to get the land breezes. Canoes moored near the foreshore are used for the same purpose. Before a big ceremonial feast, dancing platforms are erected on the foreshore space in front of the houses.

In spite of lack of space and the rocky position of their villages, even the old hilltop-dwelling Mailu people, whom I visited in every one of their fastnesses, built their villages pretty much on the same plan. Their club-houses were of far better construction than the dwelling or women's houses, and were situated in relatively the same position as on Mailu Island. These people also built tree platforms near the village, from which, in case of attack, a look-out could be kept and warning given. These platforms were reached by long vine and cane ladders, and were well provided with spears and stones.

When all the big sailing canoes are in, the Mailu foreshore presents an appearance of business and often of great animation. The canoes are all moored about high-water mark, the whole length of the village foreshore, within thirty yards of the houses. The long curve of masts and riggings lends a very important appearance to the scene.

The sanitary arrangements of the community are dictated by custom. At night the foreshore is used. During hours of daylight certain "sides" or positions are used by women, and opposite and distant "sides" by men. The etiquette of the community establishes such arrangements, which are rarely, if ever, violated. Small children know no law. Until Government pressure was brought to bear upon the people, pigs ran at will anywhere about the village, and mostly slept just under the houses.

CANOES AT MAILU ISLAND.

Bringing building logs from the mainland.

THE FIRST CANOES TO GET AWAY ON A TRIP TO AROMA.

A GEBO CANOE

Used for crossing to the mainland gardens. Paddles are used on either side but sails are never used

On Mailu Island, where there is no stream or apparent spring of fresh water, drinking water is obtained from a large hole, or well, filled by the drainage from the hills and lying some distance back from the village. It seems but the other day that they gave up the habit of burying the dead owners of that particular land just at the bottom of the same hills. With all the care they exercise that no polluting rubbish shall come near the hole, it is curious that they should have continued so long to bury so near. The water has never been known to run dry, but it rises and falls with the tide, and some of it may be salt water filtered through coral.

It has always been a wonder to me how these village communities, whose members live constantly in closest contact with one another, seeing one another continually, having practically no individual privacy, knowing everything about one another—for there are no secrets—discussing and unmercifully criticizing anything out of the ordinary in word or action, yet manage to maintain their unity, decorum and general freedom from strife. In warfare the community unites as one man against an outside common foe, whether for offence or defence.

They jointly own the land, which is again divided into clan, then personal, ownership. Hunting, fishing and sago rights are held in common. They combine to enforce tabus, and arraign any offender. When death carries off a member of one clan, the whole community, made up of its several clans, unites in sympathy and observance of the mortuary rights and ceremonies and recognizes that loyalty to the social unit (the village community) carries with it the observance to the letter of all restrictions or inflictions imposed on them by the custom of that unit. Custom is a tyrant that must be obeyed irrespective of consequences. I have not been able yet to discover the much-talked-of liberty of the savage; to me he has always seemed the most fettered and hide-bound individual I have ever met.

Clan, Sub-clan, Club-houses.—Now that on Mailu Island the club-houses are no longer standing in their positions on the village street, there is no indication as to where the division into clans begins and ends. The gaps between the houses only indicate where certain houses have stood; sometimes their owners have died without male issue; sometimes

out of grief or respect the sons have pulled them down after their father's death. But, in spite of this lack of *apparent* distinction between clan and clan, there is nevertheless a very permanent and strong observance of the clan system. It has a most important bearing on the social organization of the community. Moreover, each clan has a definite position in the village. Its houses generally form a block, some on one and some on the other side of the street. The main blocks are called *aura*. Within each of these are the sub-clans or greater families, and each is called a *dubu*. This word, as here used, refers to the ceremonial division of food at a feast; each pile of food divided out at such a time is called by the same name, and the scattered elements of the community within the tribe can be recognized by their *dubu* names at these big ceremonial divisions.

There are four clans in the Mailu Island community. From west to east their names are Morau, Maradubu, Urumoga and Bodeabo. Morau possessed one club-house called *Koporaoro*. Maradubu had one called *Omouoro*, sometimes now spoken of as *Danilea*, "entered in error," because on one occasion someone, probably a man from another village, entered uninvited into it and consequently lost his life. Urumoga clan had three club-houses, *Abauoro*, *Onibuoro* and *Dariavara*. Bodeabo had one, *Goiseoro*.

There is generally one man in a clan who seems to have more influence than his fellows, but how he came by this is not so easy to trace. Natives have spoken to me of certain individuals whom they called chiefs (*vere*) and of their having died out long ago. Whether there was any real chiefdom among them in ancient days it is hard to say. I have met some of whom they speak as having died "long ago" and to whom they have applied the word *vere*, and from the dignified bearing of these and from the attention and respect shown to them, and from them to their families, I should say that in each clan there was originally one or more such men, and that he inherited his right as "headman" from his fathers. These men were spoken of as Masters of the club-houses. A man of importance in the village generally can be recognized not only by his bearing but by his ornaments. White cowrie shells adorn his knees, his big lime gourd also has these shells tied to it; they are seen tied to his

house-posts and his canoe is ornamented with them. He wears ornaments about his forehead and breast that it would be presumptuous for any other man to wear ordinarily. We shall see too, later on, that the possession of hereditary spells marks off a man as somebody.

Each clan is a marrying-out group. It is patrilineal and patrilocal; the girls marry out into the boys' clans. The clan owns and is responsible for the club-house, and arranges for the ceremonial feasts associated with marriages and deaths within the clan. At death ceremonies the nearest relative of the deceased, or his chief male mourner, is the master of the feast. Generally, however, the headman makes the "bucking-up" harangues night after night, to encourage the whole clan to work for the coming event.

The sub-clans have a local character within the clan, and they too have their headmen, fathers of the enlarged family or household. They are owners of the big sailing canoes and of the ceremonial fishing-nets as distinct from the family or privately owned smaller nets. The members of a sub-clan are not necessarily related. For instance, in the Diadubu sub-clan of Urumoga there are three separate *maduna dubus* (feast apportionments), which would imply that there are three unrelated families represented in the six houses. The heads of the sub-clans, together with the headman of the clan, form the council (unofficial) which discusses and determines all important clan affairs, particularly those relating to the "feast." This last, and the reasons for its being held, constitute the centre round which, apart from the ordinary quest for food, the whole social activity of the community revolves.

Land is held separately by the clans under the community, and divided up again according to sub-clans, these last holding hereditary rights. The households within the sub-clan again partition off for the making of separate household and individual gardens.

The club-houses mentioned above were built on a different pattern from the dwelling-houses. The front and back rose much higher than the remainder of the ridge-pole, so that they had a concave ridge. The skulls of all slain enemies were hung along the sides, front and back, just below the eaves, "to look terrible," as they say, to any people from

other places. They were sacred to men only. And it meant death for a man from a strange village to enter uninvited. Feast and dance were held over the death of such an interloper as if he had been slain in a raid.

The signs over the fronts of these houses were the same as decorated the war canoes of the different clans, or their ordinary sailing canoes. The tools of warfare were kept in the *dubu*. Discussions upon projected raids were held there. The master's duties consisted of announcing when fighting was to take place, and of telling the clan when to make spears or shields and preparations for war. Boys went through their initiation ceremonies within the *dubu*, and from initiation to the time of marriage had to sleep in the club-house. Other male members of the clan could do so at will, or with their families in the family houses.

I have been informed by natives that upon being built anew these houses were always dedicated with human blood. I have been present in a hill village where within the new *dubu* the skulls and hands and feet of recently killed victims were being boiled; but I must reserve the story till later.

CHAPTER IV

Social Institutions—*continued*

Household—Family—House-building

HOUSEHOLD and Family.—When we touch the household of a Mailu man we are touching very tightly drawn strings, the closest unit in his social organisation—a vital spot.

The members of the household consist of one or more generations reckoned on the male side. The oldest male member is generally the head. In that capacity his word carries with it some amount of authority, and he is looked up to with some respect. With him live his brothers and their wives and families, as also do his sons with their wives and families! In some cases one of the brothers, or the eldest son, will have a separate house, and the two or more houses constitute the greater household. Before the club-houses were done away with, boys at the age of puberty, and after initiation until marriage, lived in the club-houses. The unmarried girls live with their parents until marriage. Generally speaking, the greater household constitutes the sub-clan. Property within the household is mostly shared, but not necessarily within the sub-clan. On Mailu Island there are few cases in which the household is represented by only one family. I have often heard a house described by others as the property of the son, although that son may be only a youngster, and his father, the head of the household, still living; but if the head had male issue, I never remember a house being described to me as the property of the younger brother of the head, even after the latter's death.

It is a common thing, upon the death of the head, for the other members of the household to pull down the house entirely, and this is invariably the case where there is no male issue.

But I have known cases in which the head, when about to die, has expressed to the eldest son the desire that the house shall not be destroyed upon his death. The survivors

obeyed the request and carefully explained it as though they feared that the community might think them lacking in respect and sorrow for their departed "head."

The family is housed in a substantial dwelling. All the houses are built upon dry land, and raised on piles some distance from the ground. A house consists of two floors or platforms. The lower one is produced farther forward than the upper one, so as to make a verandah. Each platform consists of ten or more hardwood planks, ten feet long and anything from a foot to two or more feet wide, and about three to four inches thick. The better planks are reserved for the upper floor. They represent an immense amount of labour, and they are carved about an inch deep all over their under surfaces. No man starts to erect his house until sufficient of these planks are ready for the upper platform. The former hill-dwellers generally have only the one platform and build a verandah lower down in the same position as that of the Mailu Island houses.

The whole of the upper platform is enclosed by a thatch roof, with neither windows nor doors. The upper is about four feet above the lower platform and the extended eaves come down a third of the way between the two.

Another unsheltered verandah is built half-way between the lower platform and the ground. On to this you mount by a lean-to log, with its upper end resting against the end of one of the plates. Then you climb from the lower verandah up on to the platform, and from this into the house proper by means of a ladder consisting of one plank with holes of various shapes cut out for the tread. The upper end of the ladder rests against the side of a manhole cut out of one of the upper-floor planks. Getting up into the house is a work of art, except for the native; and there is no need to remove your hat from your head upon entrance, some part of the house is bound to have done that for you already, and you are lucky if it is only your hat!

Temporary screens against weather are put round the under platform; these screens consist of mats or thatching such as protects canoes at a mooring. Both platforms are used for sleeping, but only the lower one for work, as the upper one is quite dark.

A flat fireplace is let into each floor and covered with clay

and sand. Its construction fascinates me, so I shall say more about it by and by. Three firestones stand on each fireplace to take the rounded bottoms of the clay cooking-pots.

A shelf is suspended from the thatch, or upper floor, over each of the two hearths. The shelf is made of short lengths of lath tied side by side and upon it is placed anything that needs to be preserved by smoke. The people are great believers in the preserving properties of smoke, and I do not remember hearing any one of them complain very much of dirt. They use smoke as blanket and mosquito-net combined. There is no furniture. An occasional pillow is found, consisting of a short log of wood. Sleeping-mats are arranged round the fires. The lower platform is more encumbered. The big and little fishing-nets are kept there, the water-bottles and cooking utensils, baskets, and the great canoe sail folded up.

House-building.—After this first impression of Mailu dwellings, which look more or less like haystacks on sticks, let us see how they are built. All Mailu-speaking people west of the island build on exactly the same plan—thirty to thirty-five feet long and ten feet wide—and we can again take a Mailu Island house as typical. Everything for building has to be brought from the mainland. The island supplies practically nothing that is used in building. The builder therefore chooses good material, and no wonder he is proud of his village. Materials being so hardly got, he takes care that they shall last as long as possible. It is true that he makes use of every bit of drift material that the north-west monsoon brings from the swollen rivers. Great logs come his way at that season. I have watched a man stand like a statue on some isolated rock facing the gale from the west, his body leaning forward to take the force of the wind, his frizzly mop of hair drenched with spray, blown right back from his forehead, with the wind tearing through it, his hands up to his eagle eyes as he watches for the incoming prize he intends to claim. As the tree trunk crashes on to the coral he plunges with a shout into the surf to guide it ashore. Many of the planks for the under platforms are made from such prizes.

Practically every house now on Mailu Island has been built in my time. On one night in 1903 every dwelling in

the village was licked up by fire, and in the morning the Mailu community was houseless and homeless. That is when primitive man really does feel "down and out."

The builder collects the heavy material first; and often, while he is doing this, he puts out an order for the distinctive floor planks to a mainland man skilled in adzing and carving. I have known a man to give a pig for one such plank. From a big log they will get three or even four planks. They adze out longitudinally one or two deep grooves along the upper surface of the log, turn it over, and make similar deep grooves opposite the former ones, and then with two or three pairs of tough sharpened poles, driven well home in the bottom of one of the grooves, they pull in opposite directions and prise off each plank. After the surfaces are adzed smooth, and to as even a thickness as possible throughout, carving operations begin with small adzes, formerly made from stone or shell, but nowadays of hoop iron, old chisel-heads or plane-irons. As these planks are made they are laid side by side on the actual site of the house to be erected, with their ends resting upon two long strong poles, which are to be the plates of the upper storey. When they have completed enough planks for the upper floor, and collected numbers of hardwood posts for piles and supports, they make marks in the sand round the platform to indicate the position for the piles. They then remove the platform and start digging operations. Six deep holes are first dug for the post supports of the two platforms, the shorter posts for the lower one, being much smaller, are erected just inside the big posts. The man's own relatives and his wife's relatives come on an appointed day to dig the holes and erect the supporting posts. It is the part of the wife's relatives to do most in the erection of the house. Grooves are made in the tops of all the posts to take the plates, and these are then laid along, with their ends finished off nicely, and for a few feet from the ends some carving is done. By placing a few spare planks transversely across the lower plates a working platform is made for carrying out operations for the upper platform, which is always the first thing to be finished. Its plates project for two or three feet beyond the front and rear posts on which they rest. The planks of the upper platform are then laid down. A space is left about the centre of the floor

for building in the fireplace; two stout poles are laid across from plate to plate against the sides of the two nearest planks and in the central space between these two poles the fireplace is constructed. Short planks fill up the spaces on either side of the hearth, which are looked upon as the choice spots. It always seems to me as if more care and skill were exercised over this fireplace than over anything else

NATIVE TOOLS

1 and 2 show side and front views of native polished stone axe and adze heads. 3. Ceremonial adze handle "Adivi" with "Ua" in position. 4. Native adze. 5. Native axe.

in the construction of the house. I like to think so too. Even before his canoe, which means so much to him, the dearest thing to the Mailu man is his house and home. The family hearth is as much to my primitive friend as it is to me. The home life gathers round the fire. The home fires are invariably kept burning. Food, warmth, sleep, nursing and comfort all circle round the fireside.

Many a man, woman or child, however, has come to us

with bad burns on arm or leg, which has been thrust into the fire while its owner has been fast asleep.

Before all the planks are finally put up, the longest of the hard posts have to be let into the ground in position to support the ridge-pole. The front one is placed in the centre line of the house a short distance farther forward than the two main front piles. Its fellow at the back of the house is placed in line with the two rearmost piles. The front one is rather longer than the back one; they measure eighteen or twenty feet. The front one has a hole made through it near the top to take one of the ridge-poles. Grooves are made in the tops of each to take the highest of the three ridge-poles. These two uprights in position, the planking is completed, and semicircles are adzed out of the centres of the sides of those planks that come against these posts, so that the plank edges may meet. A long sapling is laid the complete length of the house on either side of the platform and is lashed down to the plate beneath it, enclosing the ends of the boards.

This platform erected, another stage of the work begins, but not at once. My Mailu man wants long breathing spaces amid his work. A lot of roofing material has to be got first, the wife's relatives must not be hurried, and he has to get quantities of food to feed them all the time. Oh no! they do not work for the love of the thing, or indeed of him. His helpers have to find a mind to work first, and no end of inspiration is needed before they will get going. Besides it means more journeys to the mainland, to hunt round in stinking mangrove mud for rafters, tie-beams, etc. However they get busy again somehow. When the end of the ridge-pole has been thrust through the hole prepared in the front support, a hole is drilled through its projecting end, and a wooden pin thrust through to keep it in position. The other end of this ridge-pole is lashed with cane to the side of the rear support about six inches from the top. Immediately above and along the full length of this ridge-pole they lash another, the ends of which butt up against the inside of the two supporting posts, front and rear. The smaller ends of the main rafters, in pairs, are fastened to these two ridge-poles, and the number of these main rafters depends on the number of planks on the upper floor. Their

butt ends rest on the planks at their joins and just inside each of the two saplings that enclose the plank ends. The main rafters are slightly bent and then lashed to the ridge-poles to form an arch. Yet another sapling, an uppermost ridge-pole called *oure*, rests in the angles formed by the pairs of main rafters, and in the grooves upon the tops of the supporting posts. The ends of the *oure* are produced beyond the posts, and a short length of one of the lateral roots of the sapling is cut to represent a bird, and decorations are hung from it in front of the house. This *oure*, resting in position, is lashed down at intervals to the true ridge-pole. Into the space between the *oure* and the false ridge-pole (*opaopa dagila*) the small butt ends of the rafters (finished off in a knob to prevent slipping) are thrust in in pairs, and their tapering ends pulled down and made fast to tie-beams or battens lashed longitudinally at intervals across the main rafters. The lateral roots on these battens are not entirely removed, but project beyond the thatch in the front of the house, and the uppermost lateral root is cut to represent a bird. One further batten is tied to the main posts of the house on either side, and to these the ends of the small rafters are tied down. From this it will be seen how, by the fixing of the small rafters, the arched appearance of the roof is made.

The builders here take a long breathing space: another wait for inspiration; another, perhaps several, trips to the mainland sago swamps for thatch. A strange custom is always observed during this wait, and while the workers are away collecting material for the next stage. Both in the case of new houses, and in re-roofing old ones, while the house is in skeleton form waiting for the thatch, they tie one or more long, many-pronged fishing-spears to the tops of the main fore and aft posts, with the sharp prongs sticking up in the air. As I write there are twelve or fourteen such skeleton houses in the village, and as each of them has two such spears sticking up at different angles, quite a formidable aspect is presented skywards. As a matter of fact it is done to ward off any lurking ancestral spirits who, out of any possible ill-feeling towards the members of a household, might give the house a tilt (*bibigebi*) one way or the other while still unfinished and before they are ready to thatch it.

The fishing-spears are fastened in such a position that the spirits may pierce themselves (*duuiseaisi*) on them when trying to come near.

The native is all anxiety to get the thatch completed, since the upper storey of his house, closed in on all sides, is the one place where he feels he can rest secure.

The canoes returning from the mainland are laden with bundles of laths of split palm bark. The leaflets are stripped from the midribs of sago fronds and great quantities are tied up in bundles. Long coils of cane or other sewing material for the thatch are collected; all is brought across to the island, and the women of the household for the first time do something towards the preparation of actual building material: they help to sew the thatch. A lath is taken, three or four leaflets lying in one another are bent over the lath at one end, four more leaflets, similarly placed together, slightly overlap these, and a length of cane is threaded through the overlap. The process is repeated all along the lath, with a running stitch of cane put through. When a sufficient number of these laths of thatch are ready, a rude scaffolding is rigged up on the platform so that the workers can reach the ridge-pole from within the rafters. Each man on either side takes one or two long strands of split cane and fastens one end of each to the ridge-pole; the laths of thatch are passed up outside the rafters to the workers within, who then fasten each lath to the small rafters. These last are about eight inches apart all the way along the two sides of the house. The thatching proceeds from the ridge-pole downwards. In a well-thatched house the laths are tied as close to one another as possible, and since the overhang of the leaflet is about fifteen inches the thatch is fairly thick. If there are plenty of helpers they will thatch both sides at the same time. The front and back of the house are finished in the same way, but with shorter lengths of thatch. Lengths of small sapling are tied horizontally from batten to batten about a foot from the batten ends. Upright small saplings are tied again to the horizontal ones, and to these latter the thatch is tied, entirely enclosing the upper storey.

A circular manhole is cut out in the floor plank third from the front, and the top of the ladder rests against the inner edge of this. The ridge of the roof is finished off with

plaited coconut-leaf to prevent any leak. This is kept down in place by black palm sticks thrust through from side to side just under the true ridge-pole (*dagila egena*).

They gradually collect better planks for the lower platform and unprotected verandah. This provides not only a broad step, but in fine weather is often used for work when the upper verandah is occupied.

The house is now ready for residence, and decorations are hung from the projecting ridge-pole and from the neatly trimmed thatch eaves along either side, and back and front. The decorations consist of hanging nautilus shells or bits of mother-of-pearl shell, which tinkle in the breeze, teased-out coco-nut fibre in the form of tassels, and round the front ridge-pole support, where it appears between the two floors, they tie the jaw-bones of the pigs that the household has had the high honour of cutting up on ceremonial occasions. This particular post is looked upon as the prop of the ancestral home, the mainstay of the home roof, and on certain sacred occasions, to be mentioned later, after certain leaves have been tied round this post, a spell is uttered ensuring the help of ancestral spirits.

CHAPTER V

Kinship

Communism?—Parents & Children—Husbands & Wives—Paternal Authority—The Greater Household—*Veveni* Custom—Privileges & Functions of Kinship—Name Etiquette & Name Avoidance

AMONG our people the bond of kinship is strong and well marked. Naturally it is most marked among members of a household, wherein custom dictates that most of the property shall be reckoned as common and shared by all alike.

Equal shares of food are given to children and parents; probably the mother, who apportions out the food, comes off worst. A greedy mother is despised and spoken of with reproach. The smaller fishing-nets, water-bottles, cooking-pots and mats are used indiscriminately by the members of the household. A brother helps himself to his own brother's property—"trusting" one another, as they say—and children will do the same with parents' goods. Such things as tobacco, areca-nut, betel leaves and bark, lime gourds, and food left over, are very often classed together as things "to be asked for." Should one member help himself to any of these things in the absence of the others, it is understood that he will say what he has done, and nothing more will be said.

Certain things would be "respected" by younger members as not coming within the scope of their use, but only because of public opinion and the fear of derision, which exercise a strong restraint upon presumption in some directions. There is a communism of the kin, a communism of the clan, and a communism of the community. Each is separate, and within each exists a jealousy which for intensity reaches white-heat.

Parents are fond of their children to a fault, especially while these are young. Both parents help to nurse them. It is a very common sight to see fathers nursing the last arrivals while the mothers with some of the older children are gardening, gathering firewood, or preparing and cooking food. They are extremely anxious lest their children should depart from the beaten track of custom. They will talk to

them and amuse them for hours. They very rarely chastise their children, except when they lose their tempers, and then they will carry things to extremes in word and action. The " word " often takes the form of dirty expletives hurled at the child; without doubt public opinion regards these as " dirty." The " action " consists in hitting the child with anything the mother may have in her hand at the time, throwing something at it, or knocking it down on to the ground. But, generally speaking, mothers are rarely cruel to their children, and fathers never.

A boy soon becomes independent of authority and does pretty much as he likes. The girls are taught quite young to help their mothers in gardening, pot-making or preparing and cooking food. There is little or no actual teaching done by either parent, but they encourage the children to learn by observation the pursuits of the village community.

The relation between man and wife consists of a very close and real partnership. They go about their duties often quite independent of each other, and neither brooks interference from the other. Personally I think that there is real affection. But neither here, nor in the case of their affection for their children, must one put into the words " affection " or " love " all that we understand by the terms. To measure the native by our standards is not fair. It always seems to me that their " affection " or " love " is selfish, in that it is a feeling of gladness awakened in the subject only, rather than an attempt to make the object glad—" How is the object of my affection going to benefit me? " not " How is my affection going to benefit its object? "

That is a digression however. Such affection as exists between man and wife it would be very bad taste to show in public, and I doubt whether it is shown in private. I cannot think, though, that among our people the woman is the mere chattel of the man. As a matter of fact, she is very fully enfranchised, and if offended does not fail to let him know it. On Mailu Island the man is dependent on the woman for his living, and she is aware of it, and will have her say on any question. On the mainland, dependence does not exist to the same extent, and there women are not held in the same esteem as on the island.

I went into the village one day to see an old friend, as I expected, for the last time. The relatives had not been called in, or else my visit was at a time of day when they were otherwise engaged. I did not intrude myself upon that old couple, but sat on the verandah of another house. They were great-grandparents, both white-haired, and were not going to have many more hours alone together; he was passing out. I could see them: no trained nurse's hands could have been more gentle in touch, no ministry more delicate in feeling. She had hardly left her old mate's side for days, nor would she allow another to do anything for him in his helplessness. He left her that night, and two days afterwards she followed him.

A father's authority, as we understand it, becomes very weak over his growing boys. But his dignity somehow tells. Father-right persists throughout, and is recognized by both male and female children. We shall see how by their system of exogamy, or marrying out, and the persistent exchange of gifts from the " out " side to the boy's side and vice versa, the paternal authority is maintained indefinitely. They reckon their descent in the father's line, and speak of the mother's side as being " a bit lost " (*bunubunu maato*).

The members of the household constitute the strongest kinship and communistic group. But communism, less strong certainly, goes beyond the household and extends towards all blood kin.

This is shown most clearly in a custom called *veveni*, a daily practice of giving a share of the evening's cooked food, on alternate days, to paternal and maternal kin. In some cases the wife's kin may be remembered on the same day as the husband's kin.

We will take an example of a family where paternal and maternal sides are remembered on alternate days. The head of this household says that in his case the paternal side is more liberally served than the other side, and he naïvely says that the wife's family is remembered to keep them from getting cross because they no longer obtain food from the daughter who has left their circle. All those outside who share the food on a particular day return that same day a share of *their* " pot." It is the funniest thing in the world to see these shares being carried from house to house or

1. A Dimuga man wearing hornbill tail feathers to show that he has killed his man.
2. A Mailu Sorcerer of note.
3. An old murderer, himself in half mourning.
4. A mourner in half mourning attire.

passed from verandah to verandah. Until these outside shares have been sent and their return shares received, the household is not called together for its meal. Under this system this very often consists entirely of food cooked elsewhere. The system obviates the difficulty of one household eating specially prepared food while the rest of the kin might be eating "ordinary" food, a circumstance which would immediately kindle dangerous flames of jealousy, and set up a terrible chatter among the kin.

Let us take Bunava's household as our example of the *veveni* custom. He lives in his grandfather's old house, and next door is his paternal great-uncle's house. Bunava's household would ordinarily consist of his brothers, their wives and their children, and his unmarried sisters if he had any. Bunava has five children of his own; his youngest brother, now a widower, has four children. Bunava's wife feeds them with her own children. Bunava's younger brother, only recently married, has gone with his wife to live in her father's house. Bunava says this is "quite wrong, and he must be brought back." Probably the sister-in-law did not feel like helping with so much cooking and food-getting.

There are more yet to feed in that household. The foregoing are the household proper. There are others by adoption. Between these and the real household there is not the same strength of tie. Bunava has adopted as "evening food" children two orphans of his father's eldest cousin—a grown man and a young woman, both unmarried! His father's next cousin died leaving a widow and four children; the widow lives with the youngest of the paternal cousins, but the four children are adopted by Bunava as "evening food" children. The eldest only of these sleeps in Bunava's house. Under normal circumstances, Bunava, with his brothers married, and supposing their wives to be alive, would be responsible for the feeding of his five children, his wife and himself. As it is, however, he and his wife make themselves responsible for the feeding of eighteen each evening, including themselves. So much for the household.

But kin communism demands that Bunava shall send out five shares every other evening to his kin, and four shares of food on the alternate evenings to his wife's kin. In Bunava's

case the five includes a share each to his younger brother, at present living with his father-in-law; to his stepsister, a married woman; to his father's cousins next door, and actually to the grandchild of his mother's paternal uncle!

Bunava's parents are both dead, but supposing they were alive, the first share would be sent to them; next would come his own brothers; paternal uncles come next and maternal uncles follow, etc. On his wife's side the parents are dead, and the *veveni* food is sent to her two sisters, married; also to her only living paternal and maternal cousins, four bowls altogether. On each occasion the bowls are laid in the same order on the verandah and the food put into them one bit at a time, that there may be no inequality in the shares.

The *veveni* custom relates only to cooked evening food. But as soon as ever it is brought home, uncooked food, such as fish, sago or purchased vegetables, is all shared out in the same way to the different kin. What an interminable nuisance it must be, this division of food! It holds good in the household, kinship, clan and community, and under each of these classes the division has a different name.

Besides all this, there is a custom almost as sacred as blood bond. It exists between two families entirely unrelated by blood. It starts in the village community between two men or women, who swear to something like lasting companionship, company and friendship. The custom is called that of *isigoina*—*isi*=food, *goina*=relation. There is name-avoidance on the part of the contracting parties. Each shields the other when desired. Each makes intrigues for the other and helps in good or bad undertakings. One speaks to, or of, the other as "my *isigoina*." The sons of one party are *isigoina* to the sons of the other in order of age. So also with the girls. Besides name-avoidance there is also sexual avoidance and no intermarriage. When food is abundant, a *veveni* share goes to the *isigoina* as to blood relatives. The *isigoina* is best man at the wedding of the other party. We shall meet with this system again in trade agencies. The functions of the bond grow weaker after marriage, and as the parties grow older.

Certain privileges are regarded as binding among kin. In house-building, the brothers-in-law recognize that the greater part of the work is expected from them. The same

holds good in canoe building and lashing, it being the owner's part to provide an ample food-supply.

Native etiquette requires that terms for near relatives shall be used rather than names. There are some relationships where names would be avoided in address, though there is not any actual law of name-avoidance as mentioned below. For instance, children refrain as far as possible from mentioning the names of their parents, but they would call a fish a fish even if the father's or the mother's name happened to be Fish. Parents refrain from addressing their children by name, though there is no necessity to do so, for if their presence is required they call them by name from a distance. The term of relationship, "my child," implies more than the mere name of the child. Similarly, children will refrain from mentioning aunts' and uncles' names. To another, who asks, they will not hesitate to mention the name if it happens to be a mentionable name. In address, the possessive pronoun is generally prefixed, as though to emphasize closeness of relationship—"my father," "my mother," "my child," "my grandfather." A man gives his brother-in-law the courtesy title "brother-in-law" but never in address "*my* brother-in-law." That would sound too exclusive: he may be brother-in-law to others. Between brothers and sisters, names and not courtesy titles are generally used, but when one wishes to get something out of the other, the courtesy title with the possessive pronoun is more likely to be heard.

There is absolute, strictly observed name-avoidance between the following kin:—

1. Mother-in-law.
2. Father-in-law.
3. Son-in-law.
4. Daughter-in-law.
5. Husband's elder brother.
6. Man's younger brother's wife.
7. Girl's younger sister's husband.
8. Man's wife's elder sister.

But the younger brother may mention the name of the elder brother's wife, or a younger sister may mention the name of the elder sister's husband. They explain it thus: "in the first instance, 'she' is his elder sister, and in the second case 'he' is her elder brother." Q.E.D.! So what else do you want? Why argue further? The avoidance

goes beyond mere name in the case of 5, 6, 7 and 8. In those cases the parties may not approach, much less touch, one another. Take 5 and 6. The girl must avoid the man's name under all circumstances, no matter to what other man or woman, fish, insect, bird, object or worm it may belong. She must never sit near him in the house, nor must she ever give food to him with her own hands, or pass close to him on the road, and since paths in Papua are not so conveniently wide as Oxford Street, she has perforce to get into the bush and allow him to pass. The parties may speak to one another, but at a distance. All this relates also to 7 and 8. The worst of it is, that often a mother may not mention the name of her child. So convenience names are given. A woman came to my wife once and said that the thing that flew about in the air wanted something from her—it was not even a mosquito she meant—she meant that her husband, whose name was *Manu* (bird), had sent her for something. *Manu* happened to be one of her avoidance-names, although it was her husband's.

An inadvertent violation of the law is followed by extreme shame. The offender runs off for the day, sees no one, slinks back to the house, tells the offended party of the accident, hangs his head, and says he feels shy for the rest of the evening. I have known a man to send his wife back to her parents for good because she inadvertently used his father's name. Quite funny little scenes sometimes take place. A couple is having a private tiff. One of them purposely breaks the law by mentioning a certain name, the other appropriately retaliates in the same way, and so on, till they have each run through the whole category of forbidden names. It takes some time, for the number is legion, and towards the end each begins to suspect that both of them look a bit silly, and quite possibly some outsider calls them a pair of fools. Then a separation takes place for a long time.

There is no actual law against mentioning the names of deceased relatives, except of course those which came under the above law (*liai*). But respect for the dead, and the recollection of etiquette observed while they were alive, causes not only relatives but outsiders too to refrain from mentioning their names. They speak of "the dead man" or "the dead woman."

CHAPTER VI

Daily Life

Divisions of the Day—Bathing & Washing—Men's Toilet & Dress—Women's Toilet & Dress—Ornaments & Decorations—Tattooing—Elderly Men—Depilation & Shaving—Meal-time—Narcotics—Sleep

THROUGHOUT the Mailu-speaking tribe the division of day and night is the same. The sun's position marks the time of day and affects the personal activities of the people accordingly. When we come to consider the division of time as marked by the seasons we shall see how that affects them not only individually but also in village and community life. This latter differs within the tribe according to the geographical locality in which the particular community lives.

The dark just before dawn is called *daba garugaru* (dark dawn) or *biga garugaru* (dark morning). This is followed by dawn (*daba*). The period between dawn and sunrise, when objects are easily discernible in the village, though the sun is not above the horizon, the people call *wau*, that is day, as distinct from night (*garu*). They frequently speak of that time as *mari wau*, the village light. The next period is sunrise (*nina mudamuda*). They have a general term for morning (*biga*), including all the foregoing. Midday is called *atae*, and they speak of the hours round about midday as " on the side of midday " (*atea aura*).

Afternoon is *lavi*, until sunset (*nïna gudugudu*). Twilight, when persons at a slight distance are hardly recognizable, they speak of as the " eye-misty-time " (*ini amuamumu uana*); late evening, with the village in darkness, is " dark evening " (*lavi garugaru*). Night is called *garu* and midnight *garu guare*. As above stated, day, as distinguished from night, is *wau*.

But when speaking of a calendar day of twenty-four hours they use another word, *samu*; hence the expression *samu seriada*, a lot of days, or every day. The term also means

weather, and, if used alone, implies fine weather. The general term for time is *uana*. They also speak of cock-crow (*kamukamu agari*). If I am right, this expression does not date from the advent of the white man; the people on the mainland possess fowls exactly like those shown in the South Kensington Museum as having come from near the Malay Straits—probably the parent stock of our domesticated fowl.

The people are busiest from sunrise till just before midday, and in the *lavi* hours before sunset. If gardens are not far off, as on Mailu Island, they return before noon and spend the hottest part of the day in siesta. On the mainland, where the gardens are frequently a long walk from the village, they often take their siesta in the garden. In those cases they leave the village before sunrise, and do not return till about three or four o'clock.

The natives rise soon after dawn. The women are generally moving before the men. Immediately after rising, in obedience to nature, the natives go to their frequented parts. It would be about the last thing in the world for a man to frequent the same part of the beach, rocks or bush as that which custom has allotted to the women, and vice versa. There is much decency and decorum in such matters. This differs, of course, in localities, especially in the case of the hill-people. The native is most regular in his habits.

I cannot say that men get to the work of the day as soon as the women. As a matter of fact, for half-an-hour after the man has got up he is very nearly the most impossible human being that you could meet. Perhaps if there were a morning dip it would be different, but there is not. Both men and women wait for the warmer hours for a bathe or wash. When such a thing is indulged in, it takes place generally just after siesta. Men and women never bathe in the same place at the one time. Those ceremonially unclean do not wash until the allotted spell of uncleanness is complete.

Young men and young women, who wish to look attractive in the evening, scrape a coconut and rub it as soap over their bodies in the shallow sea-water. On the mainland, coming back from the gardens, both men and women bathe in the fresh-water streams and pools. The Mailu Island community, except when travelling on the mainland, never

bathe in fresh water, having none at home but the drinking-water pool. After the sun has got well up, and it is hot, mothers take their babies down to the sea and wash them, the youngsters lustily screaming during the process. In working hours, during the hot weather, men, and sometimes women, run down to the sea for a cooling dip, and small boys spend a great deal of their time playing about in or on the water. Before dances and special occasions men and women bathe carefully and anoint their bodies with the scraped oily coconut. I think that as a rule the men are cleaner than the women. Generally speaking they do not look dirty, and a well-groomed muscular man, naturally graceful in every movement and clothed in little else than his shining brown skin, reveals a physique not to be despised.

His original and normal dress, when I first came among the people, consisted of a stout cord tightly wound round the waist, fastened in front, and one end brought down, pulled between the legs, drawn up and fastened at the back. There are three different kinds of such perineal bands or cords (*ivari*) according to occasion. For about a week boys emerging from initiation wear (1) a strip of beaten inner bark about three inches wide and rolled into a cord except at the end which is to hang down in front. This is decorated with red-ochre-coloured dye. Then they adopt (2) the normal cord of fine rope as the working dress. Ceremonial dancers and leaders wear (3) a long strip of beaten inner bark, cut into tassels at the ends. This last is the ceremonial dress, and adjusted much as No. 1. At normal times, also, a man wears on either upper arm one or more armlets, plaited from the split black stalks of a creeping fern. These armlets, from an inch and a half to two and a half inches wide, are beautifully made, and are decorated with the golden strands of orchid stalk let into the plait. He wears these very tight, causing the flesh of the arm above and below to swell. Of these swellings he is very proud. These armlets also answer the purpose of pockets; he squeezes into them small objects, such as tobacco, bits of areca-nut, betel leaves and bark, small bunches of scented (sometimes unpleasantly scented, to my thinking!) leaves or further decorations, in the shape of coloured leaves. Similarly plaited bands of the same material but much narrower, not half-an-inch, are worn just

below the knee. The native is also very fond of wearing a breast ornament made from mother-of-pearl, cut out in crescent shape; a hole is drilled through each horn and it is suspended from the neck by a piece of cord. During the night-dancing season he adorns his person still further by tying streamers of sun-bleached long leaves to his ankles, knees and wrists. On special occasions he dons elaborate and beautiful head-dresses of gorgeous feathers and shell ornaments.

While the child is quite young the lobes of its ears are pierced and holes are made, as well as all round the outer rim of the ear. The holes are gradually enlarged by the insertion of bits of wood or cane, or a rolled-up length of coconut-leaflet, which for a time acts as a spring. The hole is made in the first place by wearing a broken ring of tortoiseshell, the two ends of which nip the lobe and gradually eat their way through. The ear ornaments consist of rings of tortoise-shell, discs from lips of shells, and sometimes large discs of white shell, or pieces of bamboo, in the holes of which are inserted bunches of scented leaves or tassels of cuscus fur. To the native a human ear undrilled is like to the uncut ear of a bush pig, unowned by anyone. Pierced ear lobes also act as pockets; and a dandy sticks into them not only his bunches of scent, but also scarlet hibiscus blossoms.

The man is proud of his halo-like mop of frizzly hair. He cultivates it, for otherwise he has nothing to which to fasten his dancing head-dress of feathers. I always feel sorry for a bald native friend—it may be fellow-feeling. But it is really "the fun of the fair" to see a poor bald heathen having his dancing head-dress adjusted. He is the butt of no end of chaff, and it will not keep on straight in the dance. Normally very few are bald. They allow the hair to grow naturally and do not cut it into fantastic shapes. If it grows too long, and therefore straggly, the man trims the ends by cutting them with a sharp shell or flake of obsidian; I mean of course that he gets someone to do it for him. He teases this mass out with a wooden long-toothed comb. It is made from a thin strip of wood or bamboo, split down for some distance from one end to form teeth and then bound, allowing the binding string to come between the teeth to keep them apart. These are smoothed and rounded by a sharp shell

MAILU VILLAGE.

Showing fish spears fixed to prick any ill-feeling ancestral spirits which might attempt to interfere with the building of the house.

"LEKO" DANCER AT A "GOVI" FESTIVAL.

He wears a wig of Bird of Paradise feathers, and carries a staff called the "Kea." His body is painted bright red with the juice of a crushed berry.

"LEKO" DANCER ON A CEREMONIALLY ERECTED PLATFORM.

During an interlude, hence the presence of children. The dance is intended to represent the hop of the Bird of paradise along the branch of his dancing tree.

and native sand-paper—a leaf, which I myself have often used when I have run out of sand-paper. The comb is worn in the mass of hair, with the handle either projecting forwards or backwards, as nearly erect as they can get it. The end of the long thin handle is ornamented with feathers, the midribs of which have been cut down to make them more supple, that they may sway up and down by movement, or in the breeze. The white tail feathers of the hornbill signify that the wearer has killed a man or men. So also does the tattoo mark on the shoulder muscle of either arm. The design is taken from the peculiar curve and corrugations of the huge beak of the same familiar bird, and bears the name of the bird, *bina*. Otherwise the men are very little tattooed. A key pattern sometimes runs down the ridge of the nose, and sometimes two enclosed designs one and a half inches wide down either side of the back.

The women wear skirts, or petticoats, made from the upstanding central coconut frond which has not yet opened. As these are needed the men are asked to climb the palm and cut them off. The woman disintegrates the leaflets and pulls them off from the main midrib, each leaflet as yet closed and flat. She cuts these down into narrow strips with a small sharp shell without going right to the ends. She puts them in the sun to dry and when they are ready takes the midribs out and continues the cutting to the ends. She rolls strands of bark into two cords, the same bark from which the men make all their rope (*waru*), and sitting on the ground puts both ropes round the lower part of her own back and fastens them into a big loop round one of her great toes and thus holds them taut. The ends of the strips of coconut-leaf are then woven into the cords, until the required length of waistband is arrived at. She finishes off with a knot against the last coconut strip and allows about a foot of the rope at each end to remain for tying the skirt round the waist at the side. A woman wears three or four of these at a time, in different stages of decay, from inside outwards. When out on the reef she takes the uppermost off and leaves it on the beach. During the evening time she puts on her second-best, and the greater the occasion the more of them she wears, until at the ceremonial feast she wears numbers of them, standing out crinoline fashion all

round her. In certain attitudes and at a distance she might easily be taken for an emu.

There are four types of these skirts, worn according to occasion: (1) normal and ordinary; (2) mourning—the leaflets unsplit and longer, and terminals downwards; (3) widows'—unsplit leaflets, terminals downwards and trailing on the ground; (4) ceremonial—leaflets very finely split, with broad white streamers woven in to hang down over the skirt. The more elaborate ball-gowns are also made in tiers, looking like heavy flounces. After a big ceremonial these skirts are the subject of great talk and criticism, especially by the male population! We may imagine a group of young bucks saying: "During the dance Lady Spliteyelid's new and heavily flounced skirt was much in evidence and greatly admired."

Except in the case of mourning and for widows, skirts are trimmed evenly to come just below the knee. When trying on, a mother or an aunt gets her daughter or niece to stand at a slight distance to see that the thing hangs evenly on all sides.

Women never allow their hair to grow as long as the men's, and normally it never looks as tidy, for they never use a comb. The hair is shorter, and more curly, than that of the men. Some twist it up into short ringlets all over the head. The ringlets are sometimes mixed with mud or slime, and would rattle if the head were violently shaken. In a few cases, for the sake of a special ceremony, a little girl must grow three or four small ringlets at the back, which are not cut off till she becomes engaged, and her father's wealth is displayed for purchase among the other relatives. On ceremonial occasions, and especially in the *damorea* ("women's dance"), the white feathers of the Torres Straits pigeon are tangled up in their hair in addition to the women's gay head-dress, but the effect is not to be compared with the men's. Except on festive occasions, a woman wears very few ornaments, unless in the lobes of her ears, pierced like the men's. Young girls, "flappers" and flighty, adorn themselves in the evening time during the spring months, when the dancing is in full swing. They wind strings of beads gracefully round the neck and from each shoulder down to the opposite side of the waist, crossing one another

between the breasts and shoulder-blades. They wear the same woven armlets as the boys and men, though not so tight. These are made for them by the boys. They often decorate their heads with flowers, and insert a great scarlet hibiscus blossom into the lobe of each ear. I think I may say that I have seen neither lack of taste or harmony nor excess in personal decoration and ornament among the Mailu people, unless it be among a certain type of village woman, with body heavily oiled and ear lobes weighed down with bunches of leaves of a particularly nauseating scent used on all festive occasions. This lady has a superfluity of coloured leaves or flowers in her hair, her blackened teeth are covered with bright red saliva, her mouth is full of an areca-nut quid, and she does not hesitate to help herself at a man's lime gourd; her face, with white lime lines drawn across it, is the picture of all that is coarse and repellent. She talks in a loud ugly voice, speaking through her quid so as to turn all "s's" into "k's," and "k's" into "q's." She is not a normal type.

Both men and women have a hole pierced in the septum of the nose, in which they usually wear rings of tortoiseshell, but on festive occasions they wear nose-sticks made from the lip of a shell.

The women are all tattooed. Great pride is taken in it and much importance attached to it. The tattooing is done in stages, according to the age of the subject. The backs of the hands are done first, as soon as the child is able to bear the pain, and an interval elapses between the tattooing of the two hands. Either hand is done first. The lower part of the abdomen and the pubic parts are tattooed privately, generally away from the village in the bush near the gardens, when the girl is about ten or eleven years of age. A little later on the waist is done, starting from the line of the skirt band, downwards over the buttocks and a short distance down the thighs. In all instances unfinished lines are left so that they may eventually join up with the patterns on the adjacent parts. Next follow the arms; and shortly after the breasts have begun to swell, the chest and breasts are tattooed, the pattern joining up with the design on the lower abdomen.

The face is generally tattooed when the girl becomes

engaged, or has arrived at an age when she is eligible for engagement. This is an important function, and arrangements are made for many to be done on the same day. The whole village is alive to the occasion, and there is quite a flutter, especially among the women. Men and boys are seen bringing young coconuts into the village for refreshment; quantities of taro have been purchased from the mainland; mothers are busy preparing and cooking food, and aunts galore look exceedingly important. It is the field-day of the Amazon Island women. The actual ceremony is a public one. It generally takes place on the front of the lower platform of the house, facing the street. Many of both sexes congregate around the several verandahs to *ao* (look on). The more onlookers the greater the compliment to the subject. Taro tubers are spread over part of the verandah and the girl lies on her back on these. This bed of taro, dictated by tyrannical custom, is always associated with the tattooing of the face, but the patient cannot bear to lie on it during the whole of an operation which is painful enough in itself, and the taro is soon removed. Certain women in the village are recognized as the best face-tattooers, and are employed and paid as such.

As a rule a mother does not tattoo her daughter in any part. Different women are employed for the different parts of the body, and, although small payments of cooked food are made in each case, these cannot be compared with that given for the tattooing of the face, when the usual price is two strings (two pairs) of armshells, quantities of cockatoo and parrot feathers, and a string bag. If the household has an axe, they will give that also. The *pasili*, "sago-dish," is prepared and taro is cooked by the household. Shares are distributed to the operator, relatives of the girl, the onlookers and the members of houses near by. The ceremony constitutes the girl's debut into village society, her preparation to enter into the machinery of its social organization, and, as far as I can see, is the only ceremony connected with the life of a girl that in any way corresponds to that of initiation in the case of the boy.

In the case of the tattooing of the eldest daughter's face, any of the onlookers, male or female, will get tiny bits of wood or stiff leaves, such as coconut leaflets, and scrape

from the face the pricked-out blood and suck it from the leaf or stick. The parents of the girl give a small present of food to each partaker of the blood.

This practice is observed only in the case of the eldest daughter and only on the occasion of face-tattooing.

After marriage, but before child-bearing, the sides of the back are tattooed, and after the birth of the first child the centre of the back is done. The legs down to the knees are done after the first child has begun to walk a bit, and the lower parts of the legs some time after marriage.

Periodically before big ceremonial " feasts " the tattooing is redone, when certain tabus are observed. The people say that this is done as an attraction and to enhance the women's beauty (*larema*).

The pigment used in tattooing is prepared from the gum that exudes from the bark of certain trees. It is collected in hard lumps by the women, and when required is put into a bit of broken pot and is set alight. The dense black smoke deposits a soot upon another bit of pot put over it for the purpose. The soot is scraped off and mixed with water in the potsherd to form a black ink. With this ink the pattern is drawn on the skin by means of a piece of wood or midrib of leaflet and while still wet is pricked in with a thorn.

Most of the designs are the same as are seen on the Mailu pottery and will be more fully described under that heading. Some of them are original Mailu designs, while others are borrowed from tattoo designs or carving designs on objects belonging to their " Southern Massim " neighbours in the east, or the Aroma and still more distant Kerepunu people in the west.

The old men normally wear the perineal cord, but for ceremonies the beaten-out-bark perineal bands with tasselled ends. Round the forehead they often wear ornaments of shells or shell discs woven into a band of coconut fibre and tied at the back of the head. From the septum of the nose, almost over the lips, hangs an almost complete circle of discs of shell which once was white. Only old men wear necklaces of dogs' or alligators' teeth. If anything is " on," these old chaps stick bunches of cassowary feathers into their armlets and into the cord at the back of their waists, and probably will put on some part of their feather head-dress.

Old men of repute or importance might almost be said to *wear* their lime pots slung over one shoulder and their little netted bags slung over the other, so seldom are they seen without these impedimenta! An old man who is anyone also ties small white cowrie shells either all round his legs or at the outside just below the knee, and these shells generally ornament his property and show his importance. It would be the height of presumption for any young or ordinary man to exhibit these shells about his person or his property.

Except when in mourning both men and women remove hair from the body, either by pulling the hair out by the root, or by shaving with a flake of obsidian. There are two methods of removing the hair by the root: (1) firmly grasping the hair between a bit of pumice stone and the thumb nail and then with a jerk removing the hair; (2) twisting a loop of a certain fibre upon itself so as to enclose the hair and then pulling it out with a jerk. For shaving they strike a lump of obsidian sharply and obliquely with another stone and the obsidian breaks off in flakes; these flakes have an edge as sharp as a razor. The surface to be shaved is not moistened in any way. At such times as custom demands the shaving of the head—in mourning for example—it is done with flakes of obsidian.

There is really only one meal taken during the twenty-four hours. Between-whiles they eat scraps. In the early morning they eat what is left over from the night before; during the day bits of coconut, if coconuts are not tabued at the time, or wild fruit and nuts. Sometimes a bit of fish caught is put at once on a fire on the beach, as soon as they leave the reef. But for the greater part of the year the family cooked meal is served at *lavi*, about three or four o'clock by our time. During the *lioro* season, about October, November and December, the main meal of the day is served about midday, because at that season the fish-catching on the reef is at night. The food is cooked in the native clay cooking-pots; it is practically steamed, as they use but little water in the cooking. Food is washed in salt water after being prepared.

The members of the household sit together for the meal, the women in one part of the lower platform and the men in

another. The mother always distributes the food. After making up the bowls for the *veveni* custom already described, she apportions the food separately to each, either in a wooden bowl or plaited basket. She never touches the cooked food with her fingers, but serves it out by means of a small pointed stick. A stranger is very shy about eating in public in a village other than his own. They use their fingers for eating except when the food is very hot, then they use a stick. They do not drink while they are eating, but are very fond of the water the food is cooked in, and each helps himself to it by means of a common cup made from coconut-shell. Sometimes they have a spoon made from the same useful "universal provider." I have been amazed sometimes at the patient way in which they will sit and talk and talk round that wretched pot while the food is being slowly cooked, as though the anticipation were as good as the realization! Natural etiquette requires that hungry ones shall never express their anxiety to fill the void, even though the last meal was twenty-four hours ago. "Hurry!" with our people is a term of derision and reproach. At last! Then dead silence (I mean only as far as speaking goes). As each finishes, he goes down to the water's edge and rinses his fingers. After this meal some go to the garden again, if not far off, or to get firewood for the night. But as a rule they employ themselves in the village at that time, when the street and the foreshore present the most interesting and busiest aspect of the daily life. The majority of the people are then in the village, and it is the coolest part of the day. Their various occupations will be described under the normal life of the village.

They make no stimulating drinks. As a narcotic they smoke tobacco. Before the advent of the white man they used to plant tobacco in close proximity to their houses and also in their gardens, and they do so still. They collect the mature leaves, and after no more preparation than that of holding the leaf over the fire for a few moments, they roll it up cigarette-fashion in some other kind of leaf, preferably mango-leaf, and thrust it into a small hole in the side of a bamboo pipe. The pipe is filled with smoke by drawing it in by the mouth at a hole in the end of the bamboo, while a piece of fire is held at the cigarette. The pipe filled, the

cigarette is removed, and the lips applied to the small hole and the smoke inhaled till the pipe is empty. The process is repeated and the pipe full of smoke passed to another of the company, and so on.

Great quantities of areca-nut (commonly called "betel-nut") are chewed with lime as a condiment. Each lime pot is furnished with a spatula, the end of which they moisten with the lips and dip into the lime in the gourd. Then they suck off the lime adhering. The young leaves, fruit and stalk of the betel-vine (natural order *Piperaceae*) are also chewed in the same way and at the same time as the areca-nut by the native. Areca seems to ward off hunger and act as a tonic. After a time, too, it dyes the teeth a deep purple. Areca nut, leaves, bark and fruit, wild ginger and cinnamon bark, are connected with all magical operations and spells.

During the dark hours of evening there is little that they can do but sit and talk. They have no light except from a dull fire in their houses. On moonlight nights the young people engage in games round the houses and in the village street. If the tide happens to serve, they go out on to the reef with torches. During certain times of the year night is turned into day; particularly during spring and part of the north-west season, the hot season, when the lowest tides occur at night, the reefs are dry. The older women all go out on the reef torch-fishing, while the young ones are looking on at the dancing of the young fellows or are taking part themselves in a women's dance. At such a season they do not work many hours during the day.

Normally, they retire fairly early to sleep. During the cool season the family all sleep together in the upper part of the house, though, if the under part of the house is enclosed, some of the womenfolk sleep there. When the club-houses (*dubus*) stood in the village street, boys who had reached puberty and had been initiated always slept in them until marriage; elders and married men pleased themselves whether they slept in the *dubu* or in the family house. The fire is kept burning all night.

Strong ties of affection and remembrance bind the several members of the household together. When one member goes away to another place, or, as in the case of the marriage of a girl, to another house; or when one of the house is sick

and another goes away for a time; in brief, when there seems to be a vacant sleeping-place, those still remaining are restless and disturbed. To comfort them at such a time certain women possess a spell and a charm. Here is one, which was given to Dini's wife by her maternal grandmother. She takes a bunch of dried banana leaves and whisks them slowly, as though sweeping the whole floor of the house, and as she whisks it from side to side she chants:

Eee . . . parapara ma raroai	
Eee . . . doni papa ma raroai	With lizard feathers sweep
Eee . . . Anave papa ma raroai	With Anave (small sea-bird) feathers sweep
Eee . . . Doroma papa ma raroai	With booby feathers sweep
Eee . . . Taa papa ma raroai	With cricket feathers sweep
Bedila urumu ma raroai	Heavy hardwood floor-boards (*bedila*) sweep
Araga urumu ma raroai	(Another hardwood floor-board)
Orimu papa ma raroai	(Feathers from Arimu, a place on the coast)
Gabadi papa ma raroai	(Another place on the coast)
Ia ma raroai	I sweep
Anaikouna ma raroai	(Name of female ancestor)
Ia Navai ma raroai	I Navai (her own name) sweep
Ia Warara ma raroai	I Warara (female ancestor) sweep
Ia raroaiba o.	I, sweep with me, sweep.

She chants this, chewing cinnamon bark as she chants, and having gone over the whole floor she spits out the cinnamon bark as the completion of the spell, and taking the bunch of leaves ties them on to the main post of the house, so that the rustle of them in the breeze may be heard within. The spell is chanted that they may all sleep lightly and remember the one gone, not oversleep in the morning, wake up fresh, go to work fresh and not feel weak and lazy!

CHAPTER VII

Village Life

Division of Time—Work

THE year is broadly divided into two unequal parts by the prevailing winds. The first, the south-east season (*Bodea uana*), is made by the south-east trade wind, which, with a few intermittent breaks, blows continually from April to December, but hardest, night and day, in July, August and September, lessening off a little at night in October. The second, the north-west monsoon (*avara*) (in the Mailu district west and west-south-west), blows during January, February and March. It is more squally than the south-east and not so persistent, but those squalls often possess terrific force and are very much dreaded by Mailu sailors.

The natives subdivide these two main seasons and the times between into shorter periods, which they name after the budding, flowering, fruiting and leaf-shedding times of certain deciduous trees, *lioro* and *viniu* in particular; and the budding, flowering, seed-bearing, seed-dispersing and stalk-breaking times of the tall cane grass, *silowo*. This grass is to be distinguished from the rank sword-grass, *nabuna*, the fiercest enemy of gardeners and planters. A whole year is called *lioro*. That name, as we shall see, is also the name for spring, and is the "calendar" name for the tree from which the great sailing canoes are made, though in respect of its wood and utility it is also called *moda*.

After this brief introduction I will try to give the natives' own description of the seasons. Just before the south-east wind begins to lessen in force, the flowering buds appear on the *viniu*; rain falls at that time and the buds soon open. These trees become a mass of scarlet blossom, seen for many miles on their leafless stems, and *viniu* season, the harbinger of spring, has come. Tides begin to get lower at night (September). Since a little torch-fishing on the reef begins, this is called *Moge*, time of torch-fishing. This

ceases again on account of heavy rains. The young leaf buds of the *lioro* appear. Heavy rain follows. The *viniu* flowers drop off, the leaves come out, and the fruit, *batu*, begins to grow within the leaves; when this fruit appears, its name is given to the season. After this follows the "little *lioro*" season. The Mailu man says the south-east wind gets less, the leaves of the *lioro* sprout and men are hungry. Because the leaves are very young and tender, they tremble in the breeze; so men's hunger and empty stomachs at that time cause their intestines to murmur and tremble, and men go stealing food because of hunger. During that moon the leaves broaden and the *lioro* blossoms appear with their scent.

Here begins spring-time, the time when the native is happiest. The tides become lower at night. Torch-fishing starts more earnestly. Temporary huts are built on the beach for coolness at night, either on the village foreshore or nearer the different parts of the reef where most fishing is likely to take place. Love-making goes on apace. *Obu* time follows—so called from the name of the *lioro* fruit, which has just started to grow. Everybody goes out torch-fishing; the night tides are now the lowest, with strong cool land breezes. "Big *lioro*," spring proper, has come. Day is turned into night or vice versa. There are no seas, only calm, a slight puff of westerly wind, and the south-east monsoon is finished (December), and the heart of the Mailu man is glad. Very little work is done. The days are baking hot. The closely compact bunches of the pandanus fruit (*dua*) ripen, and are put on the canoes for refreshment on the coming big trip to Aroma for pigs. Mailu Islanders, men of Kurere, Loupomu and Laruoro all go together on this trading trip; the strong blow of the westerly wind brings them back. Soon after arrival home, when there is a lull in the wind, the feast is held.

During the strong monsoon, often bringing torrential rains, the people are at home, living on the memory of the feast, feeling washed out and listless; this is late January and February. The cane grass, *silowo*, becomes "pregnant" (in full bud), until the bud breaks and comes forth; this is *ave* time. Gentle southerly and land breezes blow at night in late March and early April. The *silowo* blossoms

fall. The native then says that there is nothing but seed on the *silowo*, and this fact marks the *silowo* season. It is accompanied by a very heavy swell on the sea, and often exceptionally high tides. It is followed by a big south-east blow, known as the *silowo* blow, in late April and part of May; it blows down the leaves from the *viniu*, and, a little later, from the *lioro*, and scatters everywhere the seeds of the *silowo*, bends over and breaks its long stalks, and then stops almost as suddenly as it began; that particular time is called *silowo lobo* (broken cane grass). The native describes the calm that follows pretty much like this: "The leaves are off the *viniu* and *lioro*, those trees are dead, the seas are dead, the wind is dead" (late May and early June). A gentle westerly wind, called "the broken cane grass westerly" (*silowo lobo avara*), blows for a day or two, and is followed by rain. Then the south-east wind sets in in earnest, and the natives call the season *aurari* (late June, July, August and first part of September). It is the cool season, too cool often for the natives' comfort; it is often accompanied by driving, drizzling rain. The natives sit about, huddled up for warmth, often the picture of misery. In a recent year, one night at the end of July, the thermometer registered 65°, and for several weeks rose very little above 70° in the shade, night or day.

By observation the older natives associate the different seasons with the position of the rising or the setting sun. The Mailu Islanders watch certain spots on the coast and connect certain winds and tides with the sun's position on rising over those hills, or rocks, or valleys. The moon, too, they observe carefully, for they associate its phases not only with the different states of the tide, but also with certain winds or breaks in the wind, and consequent changes of weather. The natives are the only people I have met in Papua who have the audacity to profess any knowledge of the bewildering tides and currents of this coast. The new moon is heralded by a shout from the first person to see it, "*dovele erieriaa*," which shout is taken up immediately by all within hearing. They have no names for the different moons, but they name the different phases of the tide. Ebb-tide, when occurring in the daytime, is called *mamara gero*, at night, *muma gero*; rising tide, day or night, *kesa*

mudamuda; the reef at low water (daytime) is called *lagaru*, at night, *muma*. *Lagaru*, that is, daytime low tide with bare reef, occurs only during the south-east season. *Muma*, that is, night-time low tide with bare reef, occurs only during the westerly season, taking roughly six months each for these two seasons. Just before new moon and full the state of low water in the early morning is called *biga aama*, and they associate those two or three days in each instance with a lull in the wind, and at such a time will generally take the opportunity of running across to the mainland for food. High spring daytime tides are called *dovele kesa*; low daytime tides are called *dovele lagaru*. Spring tides (high) at night-time are called *dovele kesa*, and low spring tides at night, *dovele muma*. Neap tides are called *gero oi*. It is a strange thing that low tides at night should be differently named from low tides during the day, and the only reason I can give for it is the fact already mentioned, that during half the year the lowest tides occur only during the day and during the other half only at night. And they name them accordingly.

The actual life of the village is determined very largely by the time of the year. During spring (*lioro*) the whole aspect of village life alters. Great attention is paid to dancing and getting ready for ceremonial feasts, with night fishing on the reef. The village becomes astir in its shipping world, getting ready canoes, new lashings, new sails; perhaps several new canoes are going to make their maiden trip to Aroma for feast pigs. Mainlanders are busy in their gardens, and are also anticipating and preparing for the feast. In summer (*avara*), the feasts completed, the villagers are limp. So is everything else. The monsoon torrential rains do not induce sprightliness. Everyone lives in a vapour bath, like damp towels on a clothes-line.

Besides, they cannot live for ever on *wuwuna* (fame), much as they would like to do so. They speak of the feast as having brought fame. How they love to hear *their* feast talked about, but repeating reports of it over and over again will not fill empty stomachs. In the end they lazily pull themselves together to face once again the quest for food; no wonder that in the autumn, with the last puff of the westerly wind (*silowo*), the men, sick of the village and

everybody in it—" after the ball is over "—clear out east, and indulge in the more exciting experience of trading and shell-hunting, where they live very largely on their agents.

During the *aurari* season, when everyone is cold and miserable, and sailing round is unpleasant owing to persistent winds, drizzle and big seas, the people sit about in their houses a lot and relate their stories (*ilasinasina*), handed down by oral tradition. The mainland people are again busy with their gardens. During the *viniu* season another trip west to Aroma is made, this time to buy small pigs; after bringing them home the Mailu Islanders take them east, and buy with them east-end armshells to swell the number of their own manufactured ones. Once more the flutter of life appears again in the village.

Village manners vary a good deal with the weather, or the condition of the inner man, just as they do in more civilized countries. I am not imaginative enough to be able to say that our village manners are polite. To begin with, there is no word of greeting with us here, except the empty exclamation " *O* " (pronounced as " awe "). I was talking one day to a man, when we were joined by a third, a friend of his, whom he had not seen for a long time. After they had looked blankly at one another for a few moments, my friend said to the other, " *O*," and he replied in the same monosyllable, " *O*." That was the beginning and the end of the greeting when passing on the road. Unless the parties are very well acquainted, there is no word of greeting at all. A stranger is entirely ignored. Women are perhaps more demonstrative than men in welcoming back one of either sex whom they have not seen for a very long time; pressing their noses against face or body, they will smell the returning one, and smooth him or her down with their hands. I have never seen any rubbing of noses among the Mailu-speaking people. Normally, few, if any, signs of welcome are shown by either sex. The wife would be the last to show any to her husband. Unless accompanied by a member of the community, a stranger is looked upon with suspicion and not spoken to until he makes his business known to the nearest most agreeable-looking man he can find. I think a stranger must feel awfully awkward coming into a Mailu village.

Compared with the islanders of Amazon Bay, the mainland Mailu-speaking people, formerly hill-dwellers, treat strangers far more generously, and are not by any means so wrapped up in their own concerns. Nor is there the same suspicion of one another as among the islanders. At farewell, the one going says, "You stop on!" to which the other replies, "Yes, continue to go."[1] Separating for the night, one says to the other, "You sleep"; and the other replies, "Yes, go on, sleep." It is always an imperative verb, never, for instance, "May you sleep."

We have already seen how etiquette requires that the names of certain kin shall not be mentioned and courtesy titles be used in their stead. If two men are working at the same job, for the time being each addresses the other as *gaidi*, practically equivalent to our "mate." Apart from these instances there are no courtesy titles. There is a word, *vere*, which means chief, but nowadays it is applied to no persons in Mailu-speaking villages; it may mean that in the far past there were chiefs among these communities; there are none to-day, nor during the past twenty-three years at any rate have there been those to whom such a title has been applied. The collective word of the older men (*ogo emegi*) is decisive in important affairs, but young boys sit with them and put in their spoke. If any men are of more importance than others, it is those who by hereditary right own the *gaumas*, or big "leather-jacket" fish-nets, and possess the magical spells for these, to which are attached great economic advantages; also men who possess other magic spells and are known to fast from certain fish. In fact the possessors of these spells might be called the priests of the people, as distinct from those who are known to possess spells of black magic. I have often heard one man say of another, "Oh, he's no one, he does not know anything, he eats all kinds of fish." Apart from "owner" (*gubina*) there is no title such as "sir," "master" or "*taubada*"[2] of the Southern Massim. There is practically none of what we should call respect, except in address. All are on an equality. If I were to give a piece of tobacco for a smoke to those in a house I might be visiting, it would be divided up into little bits among all who might be present, children and adults.

The behaviour of the people is noisy, and their manner of reproach or contradiction is caustic. To spite one another, figuratively, they scratch their own faces. I have known a man to set alight his own house, and so endanger the whole village, because he had quarrelled with someone else. A bargain between themselves is never completed. One man owes another something; he pays it, and at once reckons that the other now owes him payment for what he has just given, and so on *ad infinitum*. The man of generous and willing disposition is imposed upon by less willing spirits. They find it difficult to resist the importunate. An industrious man gets a canoe; the importunate one gives him no rest, and he parts with it, but he reflects for a very long time before, if ever, he builds another. They are extremely jealous of one another, yet fear nothing so much as jealousy directed against themselves, and avoid doing anything that might provoke it. We have sometimes made the mistake in school of commending one or another, and it has at once had the disastrous effect of ending that child's progress, because he or she has incurred the jealousy of the others and has been accused of being proud and different from them. But even in a heathen Mailu village there is the heathen individual struggling for freedom from the dictates of socialism and that communal restraint which insists "enough to be as your fathers were."

Distribution of work between men and women is fairly even, more so among the islanders than on the mainland. A woman brooks no interference from a man in what she considers custom to have marked out as her work. While she discreetly recognizes what is the man's part and leaves it to him to do, she lets him know it if he does not "get a move on" as soon as he should. If the woman has largely become the food producer, it is because the man has had to be the protector of the home and village, and the sailor on trading expeditions.

The women start their day's work by sweeping the village street and the foreshore between high-water mark and the houses. She has no breakfast to cook, as the members of the household partake only of that which is left over from the previous evening meal. Some of the women go off with their water-bottles to get water; some to get clay for pottery;

A Young Navigator.

A young Mailu Island Shellfish Gatherer propelling her own canoe.

A Woman in Half Mourning.

She is kneading a lump of clay in her hands,

RE-ASSEMBLING AND RE-TYING CANOES.

This is done to ensure safety preparatory to making a big journey. The Canoes have to be re-tied every four or five months.

and, with the clay prepared the day before, others start pot-making, and continue at it till the evening.

If the weather is suitable, husband and wife and some of the girl children go off to the garden before the sun has grown too hot. On the mainland, where the gardens are some distance from the village, they start off at daylight.

Much of the daytime is spent away from the village, gardening, fishing, sailing or hunting, according to the season. The men help in the gardens, and where, as on Mailu, it is necessary to dig up the rank sword-grass, they do the digging, while the women break up the lumps and take out the roots. Women generally keep the garden tidy after the food is planted, and do most of the weeding. At such times the men remain in the village, making or repairing fishing-nets, twisting fibre or bark for string or rope, or sail making and mending, adzing out house-boards, repairing, recaulking or actually building a canoe. As soon as the tide serves they go off fishing. The women and girls chop the firewood and carry it home. If a log is brought for the fire, the men carry it. Women carry home all garden produce and prepare all the food and cook it, except ceremonially cooked sago. Both men and women devote the hot midday hours to siesta, unless anything special is on. If the weather is not too hot, and the season is suitable, they stay in the gardens till it is time to get the evening meal, after which many go off again to the gardens and collect more firewood or make torches, according to the season. On Mailu Island from four o'clock till sundown the village presents an interesting scene of industrial activity. Most of the people are in the village; burdens have been put down, and lighter work goes on.

To a casual observer it might appear that the woman carries all the heavy burdens. He might see her bringing into the village a great load of garden produce, a big basket of firewood on top of that, and a bundle of torches to crown all, while her lord walks in front, carrying his garden knife. Sometimes he may carry the child, but very often, when the husband is not with her, she seats the child on the topmost load, with his legs dangling round her neck. Custom has apportioned her load and her way of carrying it.

1. She will brook no interference from the man.

2. The load is prepared in such a way that he would appear ludicrous in *her* eyes were he to carry it.

3. She looks to him to carry burdens for house or canoe building, which she would not think of tackling.

4. She expects him to shoulder the big nets and the fish, while she will carry the garden stuff if he will make canoes in which he can travel to augment her garden supply.

5. She is the slave not of tyrant man but of tyrant custom, from which she would be the very last to wish any departure.

Neither men nor women carry burdens in their hands at their sides. A Mailu savage would smile, if he did not feel pity, to see us lumping along a gladstone bag, which bangs up against our legs, and he would feel more pity for himself if we were to ask him to carry it for us in the same way. If we smile at the tyranny of custom among a savage people, the savage has the same liberty to smile at the tyranny of custom among us civilized beings, hide-bound in conventionalities. Men carry everything on the shoulder. It is a marvel to me how those bare shoulders can stand the weight, say, of great hardwood logs; or of a pole with bundles of sago suspended at either end, and carried miles along a soft sand beach. A man carries nothing on his back except his child. A woman carries everything suspended by broad bark bands from just above the forehead, with the burden resting against the small of the back, and part of the weight taken by the thick waistband of the skirt. The head is thrown forward that the neck may be parallel with the line of the bark bands. She often puts her hands with interlaced fingers on the top of her head to relieve the tension backwards, and stoops forward that the back may bear as much of the weight as possible. In spite of this, women when unburdened have a perfectly upright carriage until quite old. Each different mode of carrying is called by a different name.

Inland I have seen women bearing loads of food in their string bags, and, with the child on top, walk over a single log spanning a dizzy gorge without turning a hair, while I, to get over the same log, have had to sit on it and shuffle across inch by inch. I took care, though, that the women with their burdens had got well out of sight first.

In spite of the suspicion and distrust of one another mentioned above, they feel it to a man if their village is slighted in any way. The Mailu Islanders are intensely proud of their position of priority among the other Mailu-speaking communities. The oneness established at the feast, and the pride in their feast as being the biggest, hide for the time being the continual jealousy between clan and clan, man and man—and still more between woman and woman—which very little provocation will cause to burst out into flame.

NOTES

[1] Implying "successfully"; the idea of continuance in the form of the verb implies well-being.

[2] Now introduced among the Mailu-speaking people as a courtesy address to the "white man."

CHAPTER VIII

Village Life—*continued*

Sex—Courtship & Marriage

THERE is a very noticeable separation of the sexes in the village. Women are found in groups, and men congregate in their groups, but they rarely, if ever, mix in public. Women sit together and do their work in a different part of the platform of the house from the men. If the men are busy, or sitting talking on the front of the lower platform, the women will go to the back and vice versa. Not only is there a professed ignorance on the part of men as regards feminine concerns, but I think it really exists. There is so much secrecy in feminine affairs that one could easily imagine the existence of a feminine club or secret society within our savage community. I doubt whether a husband or a wife gets to know the "self" of the other. Perhaps it is just as well for the husband, for whatever he might say or do would soon become common knowledge among the women.

Only very tiny tots of opposite sexes are seen together, and in a surprisingly short time amongst those same small boys, all just about the same age, a *sara* (age-group) will be found separated from their former little girl companions, joining together in boys' games, and very strongly resenting the intrusion of any small girl into their midst.

If no visitors from other houses are there at the time, a husband and wife sit together upon their verandah and talk, or carry on their separate occupations, without any unnaturalness or constraint. They are within the precincts of the home. But a husband and wife talking together or walking together on the public thoroughfare of the village would be indeed a rare sight.

In the evenings, when the older people are paying evening calls, or sitting round their fires talking, either on house platforms or beach, according to the season of the year, boys and young fellows meet together in a group, at some

little distance from a similar group of girls, who have settled themselves there first; each group noisily engages in some game or story-telling, accompanied perhaps with coarse laughter. Or the girls start up some savage song, which the boys know to be a signal for them to join in or start up a similar one. Someone begins gibing someone in the other group, and an interchange of banter and laughter is the result. On moonlight nights similar groups assemble on the village street and engage in separate noisy games. As these are often carried on far into the night, the older people frequently resent the annoyance, but the spokesman of the elders gets rather a bad time of it.

In this way much of the sex meeting eventuates, and intrigues of a sexual character are made. My native informants all agree that there is perfect freedom in such matters, and that the initiative comes as often from the girl as from the boy. In her case she gives him a sign, such as the pulling out of a leaf from his armlet, placed there for the purpose. Or, on his part, he may offer a small gift, such as a bit of tobacco; the girl feigns astonishment—but the meeting takes place! Both boys and girls keep tally of such intrigues: (1) by making knots in a piece of string; (2) by cutting notches in trees, especially down the edges of tree buttresses; (3) by placing in line on the ground the sucked fruit of the pandanus. This fruit ripens only during *lioro* time, when dancing and night reef-fishing are in full swing.

My informants agree that, except in the case of some very early betrothals, no girl is a virgin when she becomes engaged. They speak of non-conception as due to the number of different intrigues, through "functional jealousy" of the man. Parents are said to be very shocked and to reproach their children severely, but it must be a kind of winking "shock," for my informants agree that mothers and aunts assist the girls in certain fasts (*sora*) at certain times, and after the girl has taken salt water, an aunt prepares medicine (*iapa*), reckoned to be a preventive, and gives it to the girl, and the mother, at the request of the girl, prepares roasted food for her instead of ordinary boiled food!

What this *iapa* is, neither my wife nor I, after many years' residence among these people, can find out; all our informants agree that such "medicine" is taken and believed in

by the natives as possessing the property desired. They cultivate here a fish-poisoning plant, *Derris elliptica*; it is used by Malay girls "as an abortifacient" (see *Journal of Straits Branch of Royal Asiatic Society*, July 1916, p. 129), but I doubt its being used here for that purpose. Native men say that *iapa* is the water in which certain leaves have been boiled. Girls have admitted to my wife that such a thing is taken, but individually assert entire ignorance as to what it is or how prepared. Both married and unmarried girls take it. A married woman perhaps loses by death her first-born child. Out of grief or indignation at the loss she either persuades herself or is persuaded by some wretched old aunt that she must not have another, and she does not. Young married fellows accuse their wives of having taken this *iapa*, and thus account for their not having children. Marriages are often broken off in that way. We have heard of hibiscus flower-buds being eaten with ordinary food to bring about sterility, also the anointing of the body and head with a preparation made from leaves. Illegitimate children are very rare.

Just before the ceremonial feast, abstinence from certain foods, drinking of salt water, and drinking hot coconut water instead of fresh water, and the taking of *iapa*, is practised by the women and girls, the natives say, to make the tattoo marks on their bodies show up the more distinctly! At such a time they are re-tattooed over the old marks, to make them show up again.

Unseemly conduct of a sexual character, however, is never seen in public; nor is there in the village public life that impropriety and immodesty which might be easily imagined to exist among a savage community. On the contrary there is a decided decency and decorum running through village public life. Closely compact social organization and public opinion exercise a very large restraining influence.

After a time a boy says to his friend and companion, "I have had enough of meaningless intrigues, I shall marry a girl," and he definitely tells a girl he wants to marry her; most probably the girl with whom he made his first intrigue. His manner of approach now is different, and if the girl is willing to marry him, he may, or may not, give

her a small present. Eventually he speaks to his father about it, and the system of interchange of presents begins, together with abstinence from sexual relationship. If these conditions are observed on both sides, and each remains faithful to the other, marriage takes place in course of time. Unfaithfulness on the part of either party is soon known, and the engagement broken off. In the old days it meant death for the man who interfered with an engaged girl. Nowadays the presents would be returned—a great disgrace.

In *odiegeri* (betrothal) the boy does not ask the girl herself, for she is generally quite young—eleven, twelve or thirteen years of age; she is *lariwuwua* (virgin), but the boy is *warai* (accustomed). A boy tells his parents that he wants a certain girl, and they ask him if he truly wants her and if he is ready to *baesimini*, which we might translate as "strut about."

Such a love-sick, truly-smitten swain has made his feelings fairly clear to his parents and the general household before speaking to anyone but the girl and his *isigoina*. The latter, his sworn companion, has helped him in all his intrigues, and has discreetly found out for him what the girl is thinking. Before speaking to his parents he expresses his heart affection in song and spell. In the middle of the night, waking from a dream of his love in another clan, he sits up and chants his wife-marrying spell (*oriori*). The poor chap is good for nothing these days but for *baesimini*. This he does, at midday under the shade of a spreading tree, in the company of his *isigoina*, when the gentle southerly breeze is reminding all lovers that it is spring again. He goes from spot to spot chanting here and chanting there his armlet song (*sariba madi*):

"*Gaile mona mona gaile badudu aee. . . .*"
"Orchid beauty rich orchid. . . ."

(The armlet is decorated with orchids.)

Or his scent song (*bonana madi*):

"*Bagini goru gini goru aee.*"

(Word meanings lost.)

And his body-anointing song, as he stands or sits in the shallow sea-water, bathing and anointing himself with scraped coconut:

"*Aguna laiburu wani o. . . .*"

(*Laiburu* means sitting in water.)

And his hair-combing song:

"*Warara pani ee . . . kapena ati ee . . . ati mukura ee. . . .*
E, akuri likoma venovenokua ee. . . ."

It is naïvely explained to me that this last spell is always chanted under and to a spreading tree, that the love-sick one's hair may be as the spreading branches and foliage of the tree under which he sits. As he chants he teases out his mop of frizzly hair with a decorated comb.

The midnight love spell is:

"*Bauro pani kapena ati mukura,*
Aku likoma venovenokua ee. . . ."

As in the case of the combing song, the meaning of the words here is lost, except that in the case of the former *Warara* is the name of the northern promontory, and in the latter, *Bauro* is the name of the eastern promontory, on Mailu Island. The village lies in between the two, and it was on the rocks at the base of the promontories that youths about to enter the *dubus* prepared the skulls of the slain, as the first duty in their initiation ceremonies.

At love-sick times a boy's *isigoina* is everything to him, and the two are rarely seen apart. The poor chap is continually unburdening his soul to his *isigoina*. The natives speak of the midday visitation to the shade of the trees as *atae unaunari de*, which literally might be translated, midday-sorry-for-himself-time. Doubtless it captivates the dusky damsel who catches snatches of the song, somehow, somewhere, and to me it sounds like

"The moan of the merryman moping mum,
Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,
Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,
As he sighed for the love of a ladye!"

The parents make a small preliminary present of tobacco, or a basket of uncooked food, to the girl's parents; this is conveyed to them by the boy's paternal aunt, or by his elder sister. The girl's people say: "What is this for?" The bringer explains: "It is *veani*" (betrothal present) "for this girl," indicating the child. They reply that they do not want it, that the child is yet quite young. My friend explains to me that this is only pretence on their part! Properly, the girl's maternal uncle puts in his spoke (but sometimes it is her paternal aunt), and says: "Yes, that's a good hard-working fellow; take the food, eat it, or they will be ashamed; we will send a return present." Thereupon starts the *veanivirioni*, or interchange of betrothal gifts. If, however, the said uncle and aunt do not approve of the match, they courteously eat the first present of food, to save the "face" of the boy's parents, and then return an exactly equivalent amount, and tell them not to send again, as they do not want the marriage. The *veanivirioni*, exchange of food gifts, lasts at least two months. Afterwards, it may be sooner or later, when the girl is old enough, the boy's father and relatives go to Aroma and buy a pig. It is generally given to the girl's people at some minor feast in which her clan is engaged. (The minor feasts are all connected with mourning ceremonies, leading up to the "spirit feast.") Having brought home the pig, the father collects from all his male kin the other presents to accompany the pig: (1) A great bundle of spears; so many are expected from each kinsman. (2) Feathers, similarly collected, are tied to the ends of the spears. (3) At least one netted bag from each kinsman; these are placed on top of the spears. (4) Four or five or more initiation-ceremonial perineal bands. (5) Five to ten armshells. (6) Three or four wooden bowls. All of these, and in this order, are tied to the bundle of spears. And (7) three or four mats from each kinsman. These last cover up the whole bundle. It is carried by the boy's uncle, or his *isigoina*, never by the father, who does not form one of the procession, nor does the mother nor any female relative. The pig is carried alive, suspended from a pole which rests on the shoulders of two or four men, according to the size of the pig, and is followed by the bundle of spears.

The pig is killed by the boy's elder brother or other

relative, who thrusts a spear into its heart. The pole with the suspended pig is then placed across the front of the girl's house and the bundle of spears set up against it. The bundle is then opened up and the contents scrambled for by the girl's blood relatives. They are not divided out, but are grabbed and struggled for, all calling out, "*Kilu o, kilu o, kilu o,*" as they snatch and run off with them to their several houses. In no case do the girl's father and paternal or maternal uncles take any, but the brothers of the girl are careful not to miss some of the prizes. The pig is taken behind the house and put whole over the fire, in true Papuan style, to burn the hair off; it is then brought back and placed on the front verandah to be cut up. The pieces are piled in a heap and left until the girl's female friends have returned from the gardens with food, which they deposit near by. Strings of the fat, with a small share of vegetables, are given as portions to all the *dubus* in the village! It is the same with almost anything—canoe-tying, house-building, marriage and death (but not birth), and very nearly every occurrence in a Mailu village, is made an occasion for providing the village with something to eat. The better parts of the pig are divided among the kinsfolk of the girl's father. The boy's people and the boy go back to their own clan and homes.

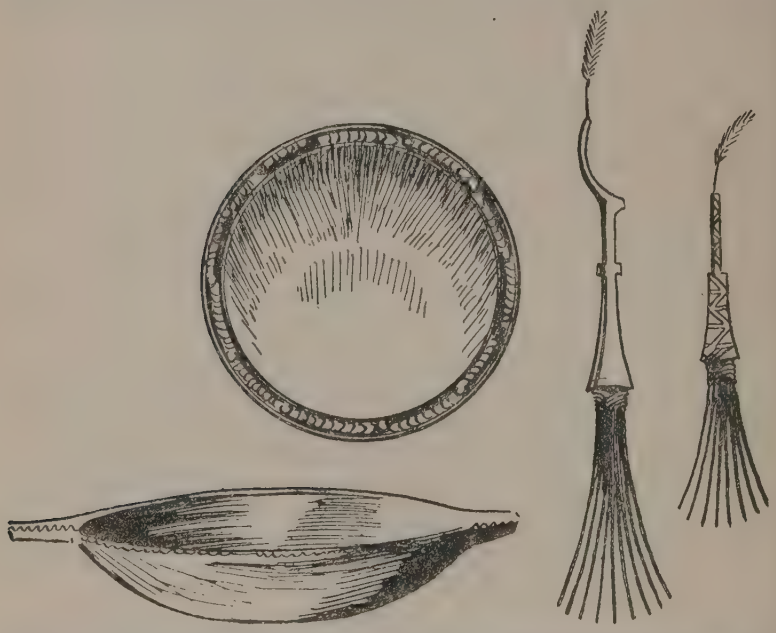
After two days the girl's mother cooks a pot of good food and puts it out ready into a wooden bowl, and in the evening sends an invitation to the boy by the girl's brother. His father and uncles give him wealth in the shape of armshells to take as a present to the girl's parents; the boy's *isigoina*, in this case always best man, takes the boy's arm or hand, and the two walk thus, accompanied by male relatives, fifteen altogether, to the girl's house. This is called the first day of going (*onibo samu*). The boy's father and mother do not go. The girl has to leave her own clan and people eventually and go to the boy's clan, so it would seem like a breach of etiquette for the boy's father and mother to show any signs of rejoicing at such a time. The party enters the house and the boy sits next the girl, and from him in line sit his male relatives. His *isigoina* sits next the bridegroom. Next the bride sit her sisters and female relatives; her mother sits apart on the front of the verandah. The girl then gives the

boy the big bowl of cooked food and he gives it to his *isigoina*, who divides it out among the relatives. The bridegroom produces some areca-nut and betel leaves and divides them among all present, but neither he nor his bride partakes of any of the food, " because this day and occasion is called the ' shy day ' (*maisamu eidema*)."

The girl's father asks her how many of the groom's relatives are there. She says: " Fifteen." Her mother asks how many of her own kin are there, and she replies: " Ten." The parents then say: " There are a lot of people here to-day, to-morrow we must make more food." I am trying to describe as closely as possible the procedure as they relate it. All separate and go to their own clan and homes. Next day the girl's household cook more food and invite the boy and his relatives to come again. Five of the fifteen remain behind on this occasion—*i.e.* the older ones. That evening the girl's parents bring a bunch of areca-nut and give it to the groom. On this day also the bride and bridegroom take none of the food, and all separate again for the night.

On the third day the groom with his younger brother are the only ones who go, and the girl's friends do not come. The girl gives to her husband-to-be food that she has herself helped to prepare; they eat together for the first time, feeling very shy, and indeed sometimes sitting back to back. The girl's mother hints to the groom's younger brother that he might return to his house. The groom stops with the bride, and her mother suggests that they two spend the night in her house. My informants agree that complete abstinence continues until the girl finally goes to the boy's house. The morning following the first night in the girl's mother's house the boy's mother goes to bring the bride to her house and introduce her to the boy's garden—not much to introduce her to on Mailu Island—and the boy's people fill her basket with food from their garden for her to take home to her own people. She and her husband continue to sleep and live in her old home for two months, going to the boy's garden every day for the food. During this time the mother of the bride generally cooks the food, but she is helped by her daughter; some days the bride goes to her husband's house and cooks his food there, but she never goes alone, she is chaperoned by one of her aunts.

When the two months are up, if the girl is old enough, she fills her basket one day with food from her mother's garden, and her father gives her wealth—fifteen or twenty armshells, some wooden bowls, a basket of coconut water-bottles, a cooking-pot and a woman's burden of firewood in a basket. Her mother's younger sister, taking the armshells and the basket of water-bottles from the father, leads the girl, who carries the other things, to the bridegroom's house.



Above on the left is shown a wooden bowl from Massim country, *eda*. Beneath it is a wooden bowl made from *moda*. On the right are hair combs (*pee*) made from bamboo, and worn and used only by men

The boy's father helps them (with his eyes on the armshells, I expect!), takes the armshells and puts them away in his house, and the girl remains there. The aunt, gently putting her hand upon the girl's shoulder, says: "*Aurilosiba i?*" ("Continue to stay, won't you?"). The girl's parents meanwhile sit lonely in their house and weep. It is explained to me that it is not the same kind of weeping or wailing as at bereavement! No, I suspect that it is a genuine old-fashioned cry as sincere as daylight, not a cry to be talked about, as at bereavement.

When the aunt comes back she is asked whether "the child is stopping well" (contentedly); "*Aee*" ("Oh dear!"), "she is just now cooking her food there." There is no actual cohabiting between the two until she is thus taken to the bridegroom's house. If the girl's clan happen to be giving the next "feast," the boy's people have to present them with another pig; the boy's clan may be giving a "feast" at the same time, in which case the girl's people also bring a pig to his house. This exchange of presents in the shape of pigs continues indefinitely with clan ceremonial occasions, and constitutes the marriage bond. If the pigs are not produced, the bond is severed.

In marriage, the girl emerges from the individual state and becomes an integral part of a clumsy unwieldy machine, little suspecting that by her entrance into it she is helping to keep up its motion. The flywheel of custom forbids her getting beyond its own circumference or connecting up its power for the accomplishment of anything new. It is an endless revolution about one axis. That axis we shall examine by and by.

CHAPTER IX

Food

Flesh & Vegetables—Sago & Sago-making—Coconut-palm & Coconuts—Preparation of Food—Cooking Utensils

A VILLAGE community represents a food-group. The food supply, or any industry such as pottery or fishery which may be a means of getting it, determines very largely the locality in which a community settles and maintains the population of that community at a certain level. With our people it seems as if some localities cannot maintain more than a limited number. Breakings-away are caused through jealousy and ill-feeling, largely arising out of food difficulties. Food, which means life to the people, is always the first consideration; how far is their social organization an attempt to regulate the food supply within the group and maintain the oneness?

Communism of cooked food among kin we have already noted; exactly the same holds good with regard to raw material. As we shall see later, semi-communism of food within a clan shows itself at the feasts and in the tabus. At the great festival, *Mauru* or *Maduna*, each clan divides up its food among the whole community through the system of *dubus*. To this is inseparably linked the system of exogamy between clan and clan.

I doubt very much if man here can claim to be the bread-winner; it is the woman who is always associated with food and establishes food-links throughout the community. If women nowadays seem to be the greater labourers and food planters and carriers, it must be borne in mind that custom dictated this as her portion, while the man was protector of home and community, perforce watchful and prepared at all times.

Except on the coast, in the shape of fish, flesh is not plentiful. They have the domesticated pig, and some sections of the mainland Mailu people hunt the wild pig, a lean, small-eared, gimlet-snouted species that inhabits the bush and devastates the gardens. The domesticated pig plays a very important part in the life of the Mailu people. It is not killed and eaten at will, but fed for special occasions

or for barter and payment. A household will never kill and eat the pig they have reared themselves. I have seen a woman sit down to fondle and cry over the great pig she has fed when it has been brought by her husband to the feast to be killed and apportioned by her father as part of her perpetual marriage bond. In another district I have seen young sucking-pigs being suckled by native women, though never among the Mailu-speaking people. Many kinds of wallaby are to be found in the bush of the mainland, and these are hunted for their flesh; some of those I have seen very nearly approach in size to the kangaroo, but I have never seen here the great kangaroo such as is found in Australia. Wallaby flesh is quite good, but without fat, and dry. Most species of marsupials are found, and when caught never fail to be put in the pot. Among these are the many species of *cuscus*. This is a tree-living marsupial about the size of our domestic cat, with huge watery eyes and a long prehensile tail with hairless end. So long as it is flesh, and can be got, everything is brought to the larder—large carpet snakes and frogs, rats, bandicoots and dogs[1]; even alligator flesh, especially the thick part of the tail, is esteemed as food by some. Birds are naturally more difficult to catch, and though the natives set ingenious traps, they are rarely able to get them, except when sitting on the nest. The mainland people often catch the cassowary with their wallaby hunting-nets, and, if they are successful in catching any of the young, keep them in the village and tame them easily.

Flying-foxes, a species of huge bat with a two-and-a-half to three-feet span of wing, are found everywhere, especially near gardens, and are caught with less trouble, for they can be knocked down with stones and sticks as they hang fast asleep in the daytime in black clusters along the branches of trees or from the midrib stems of coconut leaves.

The Mailu Island people and the communities of emigrants from the island are much nicer about their food than the inland or even mainland communities, and look with disdain on those who eat alligator or carpet snake. Some of these snakes are of a great size, and in inland houses I have often seen their bodies closely coiled up and hanging over the fire to be smoked. Portions are cut off as required. The natives say that the longer they are thus kept the better the eating.

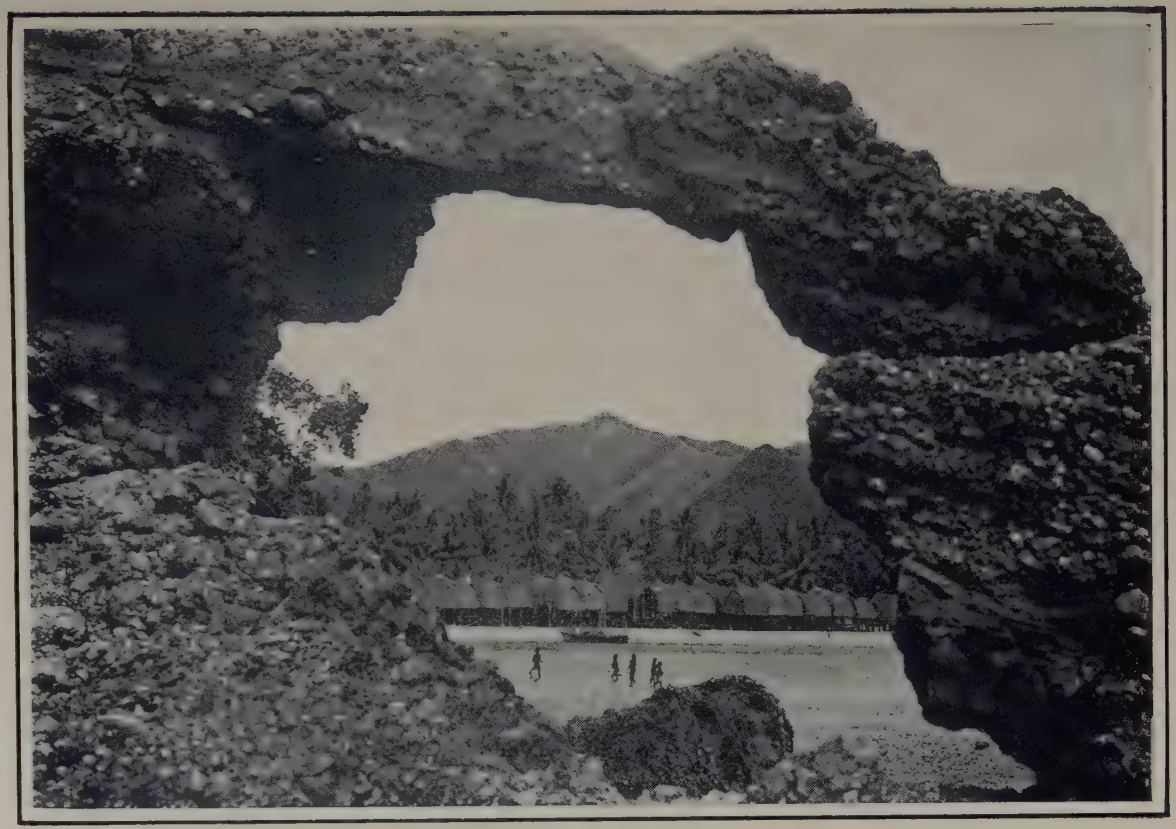
But this flesh supply is in no way comparable in amount to that which the sea yields for those who live near it, from the great dugong to the tiny shell-fish or the octopus picked up on the coral reef.

Yet vegetables are what the Mailu natives mostly live on. Taro and yam are the most appreciated. Taro is the large tuber of the *arum esculentum*; the yam is another tuber, but with climbing stem, for which poles have to be erected all over the garden. The tubers are of grotesque shapes, and under favourable conditions will grow to two or three feet in length. Sweet potatoes have been introduced in comparatively recent years, but are now largely cultivated. Various other forms of tubers, both cultivated and wild, are eaten. These tubers cannot be induced to grow well in the infertile land of Mailu Island, but a red flowering canna is cultivated for its root, and grows well.

The breadfruit-tree is also grown, but the fruit is poor compared with that in the South Seas. Of the cultivated banana there are numerous varieties, but mostly of the cooking sort. Under suitable conditions it is prolific in its growth, and, after once planting the sucker, the natives bestow very little care upon it. It will mature and bear fruit in twelve months, so that it will be producing fruit in a garden when the tubers are all finished. The butt of the parent stem is cut down immediately it has borne its one bunch of fruit, and by that time is surrounded by a number of young suckers.

I think it was Wallace who called the banana "the lazy man's garden"—it requires so little attention and grows so prolifically. The Mailu people do not use any part of the stem for food or even for economic purposes, though in some districts of Papua the natives get from the stem most of their fibres for making their string and fishing-nets.

As a food product, the great stand-by of the Mailu people is sago, and, though they have to go to the mainland to make it, it counts for much in the domestic and ceremonial life of the people. The sago-palm grows profusely in wide tracts of swampy land lying in from the coast of Table Bay, also in the low flat valleys behind the coast range of hills opposite Mailu Island. The natives not only fall back on it when other food fails, but they turn to it as an agreeable change; for ceremonial feasts they make great quantities.



PART OF A MAILU VILLAGE.

Seen through a hole in rock at Bauro Gogosa.

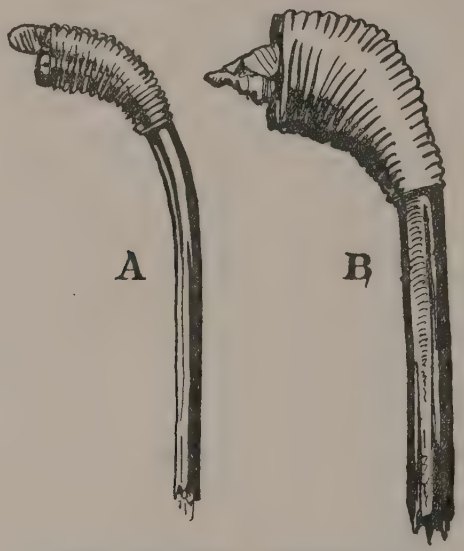
The palm is slow-growing; it is mature for sago-making in about fifteen years—that is, as soon as the palm sends up its flowering shoot. There are two species in the district, one with a spiny trunk, the other spineless. The spiny, smaller and shorter, grows wild, and the natives speak of it as having been planted by birds, though occasionally they dig up and plant its suckers. The spineless species is cultivated. The diameter of the trunk is fifteen to twenty-four inches, and the height thirty to forty feet. The leaves resemble those of the coconut-palm. After sending up its branching, flowering shoot, it bears a fruit or seed, and the natives sometimes chew this seed as they do the "betel-nut," with lime and true betel leaves. The native goes into the sago forest and selects a flowering palm from which he thinks he will get good weight of sago. He clears away the undergrowth at the butt and starts to chop the palm down, uttering the following spell, or its equivalent, for one man's sago spell is not always the same as that of another man:—

"*Boniva kau, odei kau, Baniva kau, odei kau.*"
"*Boniva* dust, sago dust, *Baniva* dust, sago dust."

"*Nina boi, odei boi.*"
"Sun spirit, sago spirit."

This is the only occasion, in spell or in ordinary life and talk, that I have met the expression "sun spirit," but this is not the place to discuss that. *Boniva* and *Baniva* refer to two rocks inland from Table Bay, standing on either side of Mailu Hill, presiding, as it were, over the huge tracts of sago that surround them. I will tell their legend later. When the palm has fallen, the head with its heavy fronds is cut off, and if the trunk is a very long one it is cut into two or three lengths and worked on succeeding days. Two long strips of the bark are ripped off from the top of the trunk and the bark at the sides is prised open with poles, which are allowed to remain in position to spread the sides out and catch any loose pith that might escape in the beating out. The workman stands at the end of the log and beats out the pith with a heavy stone adze. If there are two men, or a man and wife, one will stand at either end. As the worker gradually works his way along, he stands in what resembles a hollow "dug-out." In these days of civilization

and iron implements the stone adzes have gone out of use for most purposes, but for beating out sago I have never known anything used but heavy chipped-stone adzes, and the same shaped stone and handle is used to-day by our people as was used by their fathers. I have frequently seen my own mission boys, who are accustomed to the use of steel tools of all kinds, shaping out a stone adze by chipping with another stone and fitting it into a handle for sago-making. The bark of the palm trunk is about an inch or an



STONE AGE TOOL IN USE TO-DAY

Sago-pith pounding adzes. A, Smooth stone head.
B, Chipped-stone head

inch and a half thick. All the rest is pith containing the sago flour. As they beat out this pith, one man takes the lead in the beating song, and in time the adzes are brought down with each *Ai* (pronounced as a sharp diphthong). When the strokes are unaccompanied by the song proper they are accompanied by the sharp *Ai* only. A sago-maker who adzed without some vocal accompaniment would be suffering from a severe state of sulks or indisposition to work. I hope I do not imply that the second malady is rare, for as a matter of fact it is so common that we have never found a native who thought it worth while to come to us for

treatment! And yet it is wonderful how soon such a song as the following will revive the sufferer:—

"*Ouwa goru o Ai, goru odei o Ai, osa warai o Ai.*
Osausa de Ai, ouwa lobo Ai, lobo odei Ai,
Osagigiba o Ai, osasiai o Ai, menauka de o Ai,
Menagigiba o, Ai,
Giau au ma o Ai, rarororo rarosiai o Ai,
Orama au ma o Ai, rarosiai o Ai,
Menagigiba o Ai, osagigiba o Ai,
Bina au ma o Ai, rarosiai o Ai, osagigiba o Ai,
Rarororo, rarororo, rarororo, rarororo, Ei . . . A . . . boaede."

The song contains the names of those birds whose cries are most commonly heard in the sago swamps, and calls them, as it were, to help in the sweeping together of the chips of loosened pith. The last line is repeated rapidly, implying that the adzing is nearly complete, and the last of the pith only has to be gathered together and taken to the trough. The wind-up is the *Ei . . . A*, with *boaede* (finished) shouted on the last stroke.

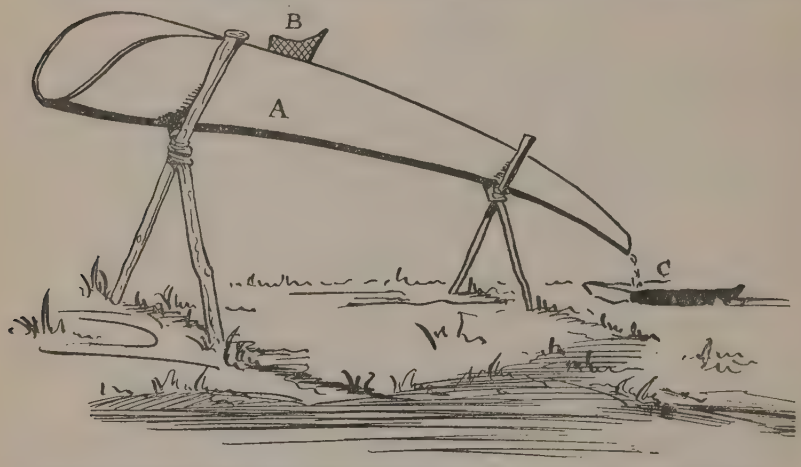
Women rarely do the adzing; the men tell me that it is too heavy work for them, and that they easily tire, but they carry away the pith to the trough which has been rigged up either by the stream or wherever they can get clean water near. This kneading-trough consists of the wide butt-end of the sago frond just where it broadens out to join the trunk. It soon narrows down to the true midrib, and a length of about six feet of the wide butt is used for the trough. It is laid in the angles formed by two pairs of crossed sticks thrust into the ground. A sieve is cleverly made from the protecting fibrous material round the butt of the coconut frond. The pith is brought from the adzers and put into the wide end of the trough, where water is poured on it and it is kneaded to wash the sago-flour (*wora-wora*) from the pith through the sieve. The stream flows down the concave groove of the midrib into a lower trough or bath, which another palm provides, with no more trouble than the getting.

During the kneading another interesting spell is uttered, that the bath may be well and quickly filled with sago:

" *A viriviriviriviriviri . . . ina Bauro korau laelae,*
Ina urua nadi ava laelae, ina ou korau laelae.
A viriviriviriviriviri . . . A paraparaparaparapara. . . .
Ina Onibu nadi ava laelae
Nina boi, odei boi."

When the lower bath is full, the deposit of wet sago-flour is taken out and rolled up in leaves, sausage fashion, and tied at intervals along the whole length. The average weight of these bundles, wet, is twenty-five pounds, and an average palm yields ten such.

The sago is brought home in this form. It turns sour in



TROUGH NEAR WATER FOR KNEADING SAGO-FLOUR FROM PITH

A, Butt-end of sago frond. B, Sieve made from fibrous material round butt of coconut frond, *nunu*. C, Bath made from butt-end of another palm frond

three weeks. They could sun-dry it and keep it indefinitely, but they do not do so. For a ceremonial feast it is brought home and hung all round the houses, hundreds of bundles, and it is sour weeks before the feast, so that practically none of it is eaten after it is distributed. But that does not seem to matter; they have made a " show," and the amount they made will be *talked* about—*wuwuna* (fame) again!

Sago is made up into many dishes, normally or ceremonially, boiled or roasted. Here are a few native recipes:

(*a*) Moistened, made into cakes, wrapped in leaves and boiled.

(*b*) Damp sago-flour mixed with scraped coconut,

wrapped in leaves and boiled, or baked on hot embers of fire (*gumi*).

(*c*) Fish enclosed in broken sago, wrapped in leaves, boiled or baked (*ububu*).

(*d*) Boil young coconut water, stir sago-flour into it, squeeze into it cream out of moistened scraped coconut (*pasili*).

(*e*) Boil sago in water in which fish has been boiled (*orebe uviri pasili*).

(*f*) The richest Mailu dish, and mostly ceremonial, is *goda*. Wrap lumps of sago in leaves, put into boiling water; when cooked, remove leaves and break into small lumps into a basket. This first part is done by women. Men scrape mature coconut into a wooden bowl, pour water of young coconuts over it, squeeze the cream out over a pot, through another basket, as a sieve. Place the pot over the fire, on stones on the ground. Boil the young coconut water and cream, stir with *diri* leaves or coconut leaves, drop the sago in, keep stirring with a wooden stirrer, about six feet long. (A desirable length for cooking in a hot climate.) Stand to stir. Get another man occasionally to sprinkle sago-flour into it as you stir. When oil forms round the edge it is finished. Remove the pot from the fire—also yourself, to get cool, if you can.

When there is no tabu on coconuts they are used with almost every kind of dish. They provide the native with oil, his only source of fat. I have known sick natives to live on nothing else but the water of young coconuts (*gado*). In young nuts there is a pint of delicious cool drink, and it is the first thing that a sick man asks for; nor does he tire of it; and the thin layer of kernel inside the shell, which a native generally peels off with his thumb nail, can be eaten and digested by a very young child. The mature nut, with its hard, thick layer of kernel, is not eaten alone as frequently as one would imagine. When available it is mostly used in cooking; the nut is broken in half and the housewife scrapes it out with the serrated edge of a shell and squeezes out the cream as described above.

In connection, however, with death in the clan, coconuts are a big part of the ceremonial tabus. Not infrequently the nuts of the whole community are tabued, and as they

fall from the palms they are laid in lines under them or about the graves of the deceased. There they remain *neburu* —that is, tabued for the special spirit-feast ceremony—often for two years, by which time they have not only sprouted but taken root, and grown to the height of two or even three feet. The kernel with the milk has been absorbed into a sponge which now entirely fills the cavity of the nut and nourishes the young plant. When the feast comes off and the young palms are brought in for distribution, this sponge is all that is left to eat.

Of the innumerable uses to which the many parts of this beautiful palm are put, one is over and over again reminded in dealing with the life of the native. It is nature's princely gift of food, drink, clothing, shelter and economic material. But, except on Mailu Island, until quite recently there were comparatively few palms in the district, and even now there are few that bear. No wonder the mythical benefactor who first brought the coconut is venerated in legend.

Besides his cultivated garden products, including the coco-nut and pawpaw, the native can find wild fruits, nuts, berries and edible roots anywhere in his forests and bush.

But here at any rate there is no "lying under a tree for the fruit to drop into one's mouth." Native cultivated fruits are very few. When I first came there were no oranges, limes, pineapples or cultivated mangoes, though there is a wild mango, stringy and impoverished. Without means or any proper attempt to till the ground, without the proverbial "rich tropical soil," and with long spells of rainless weather, the native is often hungry, and whether he likes it or not he *has* to work to get his daily bread. Our people might get much more out of the soil than they do; except in one or two communities their gardening, it seems to me, is niggling at gardening. There is not enough expenditure of real hard labour. Those naturally energetic and industrious are not inclined to feed those who are too lazy or tired to work, although, through the pressure of the semi-communistic family system, it usually comes to that in the end.

NOTE

[1] A poor species of dingo is domesticated and used for hunting, but is also eaten.

CHAPTER X

Childbirth & Childhood

AMONG the Mailu people there is little or no fuss made when another little one is born into their world.

Most events in village life are made the occasion for the village to get a free feed of some kind or other: lashing or relashing a canoe, erecting the posts for a new house, thatching a house, sewing up a new sail, death (and the almost innumerable little and big feasts connected with death), burial and mourning. Strangely enough, childbirth seems to be reckoned an entirely individual and household affair, as though it did not affect the community in any way—no presents, no feast, no distribution of nuts. The old lady relatives of the mother feel important and get busy. Mailu-speaking people are bad bearers of bodily pain and are frightened at it. Women dread the pains of childbirth, and I have heard a woman rail at her husband for having caused her so much suffering. But she goes about her many duties right up to the time of her deliverance. If the pains are very prolonged and the birth slow in taking place, the medicine-man is sent for. He comes bringing from his house a coconut water-bottle, and after going through the usual ceremonial chewing of betel-nut and *arava* leaves or fruit (the leaves and fruit of the true betel-vine), biting a bit of bark like cinnamon with lime as a condiment, he utters his magical spell over the bottle and then spits out the red saliva from his mouth over the opening of the bottle, and anoints the head and body of the woman with the water. Should this be unavailing, another medicine-man is sent for: he goes through the same performance, though his magical spell may differ from that of the other man. Having sprinkled the head and body of the woman, he retires at once.

The little one comes into a sandy world on the seashore. A coconut leaf has been split down the midrib and the leaflets of one half plaited into the corresponding ones on

the other half. This rough mat, easily thrown away, receives the bit of new life. The woman's attendants are her mother, her aunts, or grandmother. She sits on a part of the aforesaid mat, leaning her back against one of her attendants, whose arms encircle her tightly round the waist, and exercise slight downward pressure. She kneels upon the mat while giving birth to the child. If the birth is slow, the attendants sometimes raise and jerk the patient up and down to assist the birth. After it has taken place, they wait for a while and then cut the umbilical cord with a sharp shell, at a distance from the child equal to the length of its knee from the umbilicus. They do not tie the cord. They generally wait for the birth of the placenta before cutting the cord, but, if it is delayed, they tie the mother's end, and she gets up and walks down to the sea, in which she either sits or stands. The mother comes back into the upper part of the house and lies down with her back towards a big fire, and a piece of cane or string is tied tightly round the abdomen.

Meanwhile the only doctoring to the child is done by an aunt or grandmother, who squeezes the cord by gentle pressure downwards, " in case any blood should flow back into the child," and takes the child down to the sea and bathes it. The child is brought up into the house; sometimes a little fresh water is poured over it, and frequently it is held over the fire to dry and then given to the mother.

Except from those things that are tabu to her in accordance with her ordinary custom the woman practises no fast when expecting a child. But on the day of birth she takes only the heated water of young coconuts, and from then on until the cord has come away from the child she may eat no fish or flesh of any description. In the case of the first child, until it is able to walk about, this tabu is continued to the extent that she is forbidden to eat any *heavy* fish, though after the first fortnight, or sometimes the first month, she can eat " women's fish," consisting of octopus or shellfish that is picked off the reef by women, never by men. Nor may she eat sago other than that which comes from Lea, where it is wild-growing sago, spiny-trunked, and " not so heavy " as the planted sago at Delebai or Woworo. Were she to break any of these tabus, the child's stomach would

INCOMING TIDE OVER A CORAL REEF.

In the foreground is the rock on which the skulls were ceremonially roasted before the flesh was scraped off.

A CEREMONIAL GOARI DANCER.

wearing the Bird of Paradise feather wig.

swell and form into knots. And yet after only about five days she will chew up pieces of potato or young coconut in her mouth and give it to the child to eat! She must not touch food with her hands for a week, or until the cord has come away from the child (*inibo pomu*), so she picks up her food with a bit of stick. She must not eat certain kinds of banana or taro. Nor may she cook food. If a drop of milk should fall from her breast into the fire, the child would die.

For a week after the birth, if she can possibly help it, a woman will not leave the house in daylight; but if she must, she covers herself up as much as possible, winding a mat tightly around her skirts, and warning is given for others to get out of the way. The fear is, lest the taint (*asipa*) of blood may be noticed by men or others. All this however is done with nice decorum, and people avoid doing or saying anything in her hearing which might hurt her feelings. If the child does not take the breast well, the mother attributes it to the ill-will of the spirit of some relative recently dead, and she appeals to that spirit to make the child take the breast. Similarly, if the woman cannot properly suckle her child, she appeals to the same spirit.

If the birth does not take place at what they consider to be about the right date, and whispers are going about that it is quite time, the woman's relatives go off to the medicine-man and accuse him of having used magic upon her; if he protests his innocence, they tell him to go and use the usual spell and release the woman.

If a woman died in childbirth, the live child used to be buried alive with her body. In some cases it was killed first. This was done because there was no one to suckle the child. Women have a great horror of suckling another woman's child. Nowadays many of these customs are dying out. But we have shrewd suspicions that, although a baby may not be actually killed by hand or buried alive with its dead mother as formerly, the more polite method is practised of allowing the child to starve to death.

So also of twins or triplets; one or two respectively were always killed. Now in such cases we are told that only one can be made to take the breast, and not long after we learn that one of the twins is dead. In these enlightened days

relatives, we can see, try to hide it, but all the same we detect some feeling of shame or shyness that anyone connected with them should have twins. In early days I was often asked if white women had twins, and have even been told by the natives themselves that they look upon it with shame. Pigs and dogs generally bear more than one at a time, but women generally only one, and so they consider twins an abnormality.

A woman suckles her child for two years at least, often for three and sometimes for longer.

The child is allowed no fish or flesh until he is walking about and strong. He or she is generally named the day after birth by some relative, man or boy, woman or girl, irrespective of the sex of the child. The name given is that of its godparent, together with any other name of convenience that he or she may have. There is generally one such secondary name at least, owing to the fact that for one reason or another a person's name proper is tabu to many in the community.

The would-be godparent brings a small present of food to the mother and without any further ceremony the little one becomes his or her *waau* (namesake). The godparent, to avoid using his own name, always afterwards speaks to, and of, the child as "my namesake" (*ina waau*). Sometimes a younger child has the same name as his elder brother.

The children grow up and associate in *saras*—that is, children of about equal ages keep together—and at quite a young age the sexes keep apart and resent intrusions.

From early childhood the *saras* are found engaging in their various pursuits in groups; what independence there is on Mailu Island exists right throughout life as a group independence.

In the warmer months of the year the tiny children, both boys and girls, spend nearly all day in or on the water by the foreshore. A favourite pastime is to play on the floating rudders about the canoes. Parents seem to worry very little about them when so engaged, although I have known of the drowning of several very little ones who tumbled into deep water. Every child, however, learns to swim at an early age, and is perfectly at home in the water in a marvellously short time. As all the world over, childish prattle is fascinatingly

pretty, but it is a continual surprise to me how soon tiny children speak this difficult language correctly. They make no grammatical errors in talking, in spite of a verb completely and most intricately conjugated. A child never hears his language spoken incorrectly by his elders, and, like those elders, is blissfully unconscious of the existence of such a thing as grammar!

There is little or no attempt at teaching children. They learn by observation and imitation what their elders do. I have often been surprised to see very small girls making pots in the village street. Girl children have to be useful in their tender years and accompany their mothers or aunts upon all their rounds of household duty. The educational goal for a Mailu Island girl is successful pot-making. No such compulsion to help is put upon the small boy. He pleases himself entirely as to whether he will watch his father or uncle making string, or rope, or nets, or canoes. He spends his days and also his nights just as he likes. His early years are just a long playtime, and his village or part of the country in which he lives a huge playground. He catches much of his own fish, whether with his father or not, and collects his own berries or fruit from the bush. He gets his father to make a net for him and makes his own tiny bow and arrow for shooting fish. He is the most ubiquitously inquisitive little beggar imaginable, but the worst *scholar* that I have ever met or am likely to meet. I cannot find in his language any equivalent to our word "learn," though there is a word for teacher in the sense of "one who causes to know."

As a matter of fact the Mailu-speaking child's school is the playground. As I went along the beach some time ago I came across temporary shelters made from old coconut leaves, and under each found three or four little girls playing at "cooking game" (*dari lele*) with miniature clay pots, half coconut-shells of water, and bits of vegetables and tiny shellfish picked up from the reef. Another day I saw a similar group playing "baby game" (*oeva lele*). The baby (represented by a stone) was new born; it was taken down to the sea-beach and washed, held over the fire to dry, put to the "mother's" breast, and laid down on a leaf to sleep. I have seen them playing weddings, funerals and widows.

As widows these little mites arrange their skirts so that they will trail on the ground at their feet. A favourite game is to copy the thief who steals the produce from someone else's garden. The thief gets no mercy. They play too at "markets," and imitate their elders, who on a certain appointed day take a great number of pots to the mainland and exchange them for food from inland people who come down to the coast.

These irreverent little creatures also have the temerity to play the "sorcerer game" (*barau lele*), when the pretending sorcerer ties any old shells all over herself or himself and parades about with the lime gourd slung from one shoulder and from the other the small netted bag full of bits of leaves and magical stones. Girls also play the wasps'-nest game (*gugu lele*). A group of them sit as close as possible together on the sand, take off their outer skirts, roof themselves over with these, and put some coconut leaves on top of all; another batch of tiny girls hear the bizz-buzz of the wasps and run and get torches, light them, and beat the roof of the nest so that sparks fly everywhere and the "wasps" jump up and fly from the nest.

Everything connected with community life is imitated and played at, from the game of running amok (*oo lele*), through pot- and basket-making, to the big ceremonial spirit feast, when small crabs, standing for the pigs, are killed, put over the fire "to burn the hair off!" and then cut up and distributed in proper fashion according to the number of *dubus*.

Boys' games encourage dexterity of hand and quickness of eye: trying to catch and spear the shadows of other boys, spearing coconuts laid out in line (each of the two competing lines of boys continue until each boy on one side has missed once), chasing and spearing a chunk of banana stalk pulled at the end of a long string by one boy, until his place is taken by the next successful thrower. They engage also in war games and fishing games. The most fascinating of the fishing games is that of the *gauma lele*, in which they act the catching of the "leather-jacket" fish on the reef with the big *gauma*, or ceremonial net. Twenty or thirty little kiddies group together under the shade of a tree, representing a mass of coral, from which they make timid sorties out into the open, while eight or ten of their companions hold a long

rope or cane as the *gauma* and approach or retrace their steps in the "water" as they see the group of fish cluster together or disperse. Every now and again the fish group hold up their hands and turn them quickly from palms out to backs out, so that their fairer-skinned palms alternating with the darker backs of their hands look really very like the water quivering in the sunlight over a group of fish near the surface. Finally they are all enclosed in the net and all join in the song, the song of the fisherman as he pulls his catch up on to the canoe. A similar game is the catching of the dugong, and the girls have a pretty imitation of torch-fishing on the reef at night. While playing this game they sing:

"*Tuama gan'adei ne.*"
"Oh shrimp your mother."

"*Gidani mai la onaea de.*"
"Wild food to get has gone."

"*Tuama o nunusi o.*"
"Shrimp! cover yourself with sand."

Boys also play catching the alligator in a trap, making sago, the attack on the sago-makers by bush people and bringing home the dead.

There are the regular seasonable games, such as making and sailing model canoes. Some of the models made by their elders are really works of art. Great pride is taken in them, and they are brought out again year after year, some of them with new ropes and rigging and sails. Others consist merely of two light pieces of wood, one as outrigger and one as canoe proper, with a single stick thrust into either piece as the connection; the sails of some of these are only large single leaves with the top cut out to make the shape of real sails. At certain times of the year from the deck of a steamer getting near Papua I have seen these little model canoes miles out at sea.

The girls play a seasonable shuttlecock game called *etagu*. The shuttlecock consists of narrow strips of dried banana leaf wound tightly about themselves. Their ends, brought together and tied, act as guides, as the feathers do with us. The flat palm of the hand is used for knocking up the shuttlecock, which each girl tries to keep up as long as possible. It is not sent from one player to another. They

start by singing a short song, the meaning of which is lost. Holding the shuttlecock in the hand they sing :

" *Abo na keu, marai bada keu,*
Keukeu o, keu korara o,
Keu la budia ! "

At the word *budia* they strike the shuttlecock into the air, each strike being counted in Mailu numbers.

At another part of the year, when it is colder and they spend more time in the house or on the verandah, they play at cats' cradles, and with their pieces of looped string make most elaborate figures, with still more names, songs and explanations. The native name for the game is *viriaau*. I do not possess the skill, the space, or I fear the patience, to enter here into intricate descriptions. I recommend the reader to Miss Haddon's interesting work on the subject. When that lady stayed with us she was diligent, as were the girls, in trying to find designs. Some of the figures are : the land crab, the reef at low water, the star, the black-lip pearl shell, the scrub pheasant, the scrub hen, the wooden bowl, the cuscus, the Torres Straits pigeon, the octopus, the parrot, the cassowary, the comb, the sugar-cane, the taro, the island, clouds standing in line, the pig tusk, and the cough. This last is not so much a figure as the tricky winding of the loop around the neck in such a way that with the jerk of the hand accompanied by a cough the string comes away at once !

During the colder months too, in the evenings round the fire or on wet days, the youngsters in their groups tell the folk-stories of oral tradition, much to the annoyance of some of the elders, who object to an incorrect version of a story.

Besides the foregoing, there are the more boisterous games indulged in by both boys and girls, such as *Ui karau*, like our hide-and-seek, accompanied by the native song :

" *Abo na de ui karau ?* "
" Where are you secretly sleeping ? "
" *Maisi oro de uikarau.* "
" Maisi hill on sleeping secretly."
" *Mari erieria !* "
" Your village I can see."
" *Kokoko !* "
(Shout of triumph.)

" Tug of war " is really a " push of war," for in place of a rope a long pole is used, and instead of the pull of either side it is a push of either side. Then there are ring games, hopping games, line games, and games imitative of habits of certain animals accompanied by songs and bursts of acclamation as a wind-up.

Especially on the mainland, where there is so much more bush, little chaps amuse themselves by making ingenious small traps to catch birds, wallaby or cuscus, but of these traps more later. The Mailu child's stay in the kindergarten is a long one; and he is not very old before he knows the names of all the fish in the water near his village, and the crustaceans found on his reef; he also knows the names of all the woods and to what useful purpose they can safely be put.

He is a great little companion, and seems to have eyes all over his head, sometimes more eyes than he requires, for he often sees things that are never there; he is not too young to have learned much of superstitious fear.

" Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
. . . . . .
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art;
A wedding or a festival,
A mourning or a funeral;
And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
But it will not be long
Ere this be thrown aside,
And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part;
Filling from time to time his ' humorous stage '
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation."

CHAPTER XI

Initiation

The Club-houses—Position—Names—Masters—Skulls—Bringing Home Victims' Skulls—Initiation Ceremonies—Seclusion of Initiates—Tabu—Initiation of Girls

THE village on Mailu Island, which again we choose as our type, takes the curve of a bay lying between the two high promontories, *Bauro gogosa* (eastern cape) and *Warawara gogosa* (western cape). The bay faces north-east, and from its foreshore can be clearly seen all the original Mailu hill villages on the mainland, with whose people the islanders were always at enmity. The two promontories protect the bay from bad weather, and a coral reef stretches from Bauro to Warawara, preventing any dangerous swell from reaching the shore. At dead low-water, except for pools here and there, the whole of this reef is dry from promontory to promontory and from the sand beach to the edge of the reef, where there is an immediate drop into deep water. Midway between the two *gogosa* there is a small passage, caused by a depression in the reef edge, which, even at low-water, allows canoes just to get sufficiently over the reef to find shelter until the tide rises, when they can be brought in and moored in front of the village. While the tide is out the canoes " sit " on the sand or dead, broken coral.

Five club-houses formerly stood in the village street, in positions corresponding to the clans to which they respectively belonged. Bodeabo clan had one such called *Goiseoro*; Urumoga clan had two, one at either end of their section of the village: *Dariavara* and *Onibuoro*; Maradubu possessed one called *Danilea* (entered in error), because its owner killed everyone from another village who entered it, whether invited to enter as guest or not; Morau clan had one club-house called *Koporaoro*; and, before their exodus to a new spot in Baxter Bay, Oraedo clan had a club-house called *Agiuoro*. These club-houses were named after hills (*oro*),

either on Mailu Island or on the coast west of Mailu. Each was owned by a certain man, called the *gobuegi*, and he was the chief (*vere*) of his clan. They were hereditary *gubinas* (owners) of the *dubus*. None of the *dubus* was open to men of other villages uninvited, and death was always the penalty for breaking this law. Sometimes the other *dubus* went to the same length of deceit as *Danilea*, but not as a general rule. A woman never entered under any pretext.

Their shape differed from that of the ordinary dwelling-houses. They consisted of two platforms raised on high carved posts, but the ridge-pole was made to sag in the centre so that the two ends rose; each of these projected a long way beyond the building and was decorated with skulls, cassowary feathers and white cowrie shells. After the skulls of murdered people had been in the *dubus* for some time they were brought out and suspended along the eaves of the thatch and from the produced ends of all the tie-beams both back and front, as were also the bones of the forearms and hands, and legs and feet. In the *dubu* were kept all the spears and shields and regalia of war. On each platform there were two fireplaces, one towards either end, and from the ridge-pole down to the fireplace hung long ropes, on which were threaded skulls and the aforesaid bones of more recently killed victims. At one end of the dark interior was a permanent raised seat or platform for the *siriri egi*, the man whose duty it was to lead the *moragobu*, the night-long dirge chanted after a successful massacre. No rest from the chanting could be taken by the warriors or occupants of the *dubu* except at the word of this man, who gave only very short spells of rest and then led them off again in chant. Later on I will give a description of a massacre and the dirge of the watches of the night. Suffice it to say here that the warriors returning from their raid, in their *bobores* (war canoes), were watched by the women, standing on the beach in lines and waving branches of coloured leaves to them, and as soon as they were close enough to recognise the widow, sister or mother of one of their warriors killed in a former raid, they threw ashore, for her to catch, the head of the new victim, killed as payment for their own previous loss. She took it off to the verandah

of her house and nursed it on her lap, allowing the blood to run on to her skirt, in remembrance of her husband's blood spilt by the village from which that head had come! Meanwhile the forearms, and legs from the knees downward, had been thrown ashore and taken to the other *dubus*. A brother of the widow nursing the head then took it from her, put it upon a mat on the verandah of his house, and decorated it with feathers and nose and ear ornaments. It was taken next by the *gobuegi*, who uttered a spell over it, and gave the word for all those boys (*uau tamaru*) of that clan who had not yet been initiated, but had arrived at puberty, to form in a line on the street, and stand, one behind the other, with their legs apart. The *gobuegi* then, after uttering the spell, bowled the skull down the lane of legs, as a baptism of blood. This was done that the boys might not become blind from the blood of the victim or victims, and that their eyes might become alert and quick to see where they might kill. These naked lads carried off the skull or skulls and limbs to one or other or both of the promontories, Bauro and Warawara, and made big fires on the flat rocks, on which to bake off the flesh.

In a short time the initiates removed the head from the fire and peeled off the skin and flesh with their fingers, and made a hole through the top of the skull, through which they threaded a piece of string. The skulls and bones were then hung from horizontal poles over various fires to smoke them, with the initiates seated round.

Meanwhile the coast villages had seen the fires and smoke on Bauro and Warawara, and read only too clearly their meaning. After the sun had gone down, men and women took lighted torches and, standing along the foreshore of the little bay, waved them up and down to send the souls of their victims back to their own villages.

In the evening these boys carried the gruesome remains up into their several *dubus*.

For these initiates it was true:

> "Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
> And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
> . . . deep almost as life."

That day meant good-bye to the maternal roof, until they themselves should marry.

That night for the first time they joined in with the warriors in the *dubu*, singing or chanting the *mao*, the song of rejoicing over victorious killing. After that the *mao* was sung and drums were beaten in the *dubus* every night until the *lua* day, the day of emergence of the initiates from the *dubu*. A section of each clan went off sago-making and buying and collecting food while the initiates were observing their fast (*sora*). These might eat no flesh at all, nor any food cooked in pots, but only baked food, taro, bananas or sago. They drank no water except coconut water, heated in the shell over the fire. Their mothers prepared their food in the prescribed way, but never took or handed it to them. If they were obliged to leave the *dubu* in the daytime, they covered themselves up with mats, so that they might not be seen by women or girls. From the moment that the victim's head was bowled under their legs they were forbidden to wash, even their hands. Nor might their fingers come in contact with their food or their bodies. They kept pointed bits of wood to pick up their food and convey it to their mouths, and similar bits in case they wished to scratch their heads or their bodies. They might not comb their hair. By day they sat around the *dubu* fires, the smoke from which rose about the skulls or bones of the victims. By night they slept around these trophies.

One night, when the food party had returned and hung the food in great quantities round the dwelling-houses, or stacked it on the verandahs, the warriors once more assembled in the *dubus*, wearing their full-dress uniform, and kept the watches of the night with beating of drums in awe-inspiring manner at intervals between the *moragubu* dirge, led by the *siriri egi* from his raised platform. Great quantities of food, cooked by the women, were brought to them throughout the night. The *gobuegi* and the initiates were allowed to partake of none.

Just after dawn the women, highly decorated, came with their drums and danced the *oma besi* songless dance in front of the *dubu*, and the warriors, hearing them, stood up in their places and sang another *mao*, thrilling the souls of the women, whose drumming and chanting was redoubled

in excited energy as the latest victim's skull was held out to them on the end of a spear or pole. The women then separated, and soon after the dawn of the *lua* day the warriors and the initiates came down from the *dubu* to bathe. They returned to the *dubus* and donned full dress and ornament. The initiates then had the perineal bands put on them by their maternal uncles. The *badibo* (first tying) *ivari* (perineal band or cord) consisted of a length of beaten bark about three inches wide, and dyed yellow and red. This first and ceremonial band was known as *maila*, in distinction from the ordinary *ivari*. The initiate's maternal uncle took it in his hand and, ceremonially chewing betel-nut, betel-vine leaves and lime, pronounced a spell,

"*Aroma eva evaivari o aupaisaa bororouri o, rorouri o, e e e.*"
"Aroma take this *ivari*, oh, I will tie tight" (meaning lost),

anointed it with the saliva and proceeded to adjust it on the boy, singing the spell over and over again as he adjusted the *maila*. One end was held flat against the boy, starting just below the chest, and as it approached the lower part of the abdomen it was twisted into a cord and a turn (*bui*) taken round the foreskin which was drawn back between the testes, and the *maila* drawn up between the buttocks to the waistline, where it was temporarily held, while it was taken at a right angle round the waist until the angle was reached again, where it was fastened, and the flat end allowed to hang down over the buttocks. Similarly the end in front was allowed to hang over that part of the waistband which enclosed it. It was tied so tight round the waist that the abdomen was drawn right in by the band. No wonder the initiate fasted for the whole of that day, when everyone else, except the *gobuegi*, was feasting! In the evening he slightly loosened the band round his waist and partook of a bit of food.

I have entered thus into detail over adjusting the *maila* because, although to our unaccustomed civilized eyes the dress or covering might seem slight, to say the least of it, in their eyes it is all-sufficient and sacred. For a man in a rage—he would never have done so when in his senses—to have mentioned the word *bui* in the presence of a woman

would have meant probably as much as his life was worth. A savage's sense of decency may differ from yours and mine, but it is every bit as real to him as ours is to us.

While the initiates were solemnly going through this institution, the *gobuegi* and his warriors were donning all their best war-paint and ornaments, and getting ready their spears and shields.

The boys too were decorated with dried-leaf streamers, tied to their knees, ankles and wrists; their mop of hair was teased out for the first time for a fortnight or more, and carrying the skulls or bones suspended by cords they emerged from the *dubu*, with the warriors carrying their spears and shields, while others carried drums, and formed a great procession, swollen in number as the contingents from the other *dubus* joined in. Up and down the long street they danced the songless *lua* dance in procession, and were met by the highly decked-out women with their drums, beating time to their dance for *lua* day. Their dance, also songless, is called the *oma besi*. After this gay scene the men all returned to the *dubu* and put back their regalia. The initiates remained there, fasting for the rest of the day. The *maila* was worn by them for about a fortnight, but their fasts and restrictions connected with the particular ceremony were over, and they were free to strut about as if the whole world belonged to them, appearing blissfully unconscious that there was any work to be done in the village. At the end of the fortnight, instead of the *maila*, each donned a cord (*ivarí*), which, also, he fastened so tight round his waist that it looked almost as though it would cut him in half.

The foregoing ritual has long since ceased. Boys in the Mailu district who go through any initiation at all, now undergo it on the canoes during one of the big trips east or west, but its main impetus has disappeared with the abandonment of community reprisals and head-hunting.

The above details have been given me by those alive to-day who have actually gone through the initiation ceremony as described. For some years after I came to live among these people, no other mode of dress than the perineal cord was worn by men and youths, which was first donned about the age of puberty at an initiation ceremony

of much less elaborate form. It was always the custom for the father of the initiate to give the under jaw of a pig to the boy's maternal uncle, either at the time of the ceremony itself or at a subsequent feast.

There is no ceremony for the initiation of girls in any way corresponding to that for the initiation of boys. As I have already mentioned, the tattooing of the face of the girls constitutes their debut into society. In the case of the eldest girl of a family it is made more of, and any onlooker, irrespective of sex, is at liberty at the tattooing to scrape a bit of the blood from the face with leaf or stick and suck it, and to expect payment for the honour of doing so. For four or five days after the operation the subject eats only food that is broken up very small, so that the lines of the tattoo may not become broad or run into one another! Though she naturally becomes more self-conscious until she has got used to it, she is in no way secluded, but lives under the maternal roof until marriage.

CHAPTER XII

Canoes & Canoe-Building

Single, Outrigger Canoes—Double Dug-outs—War Canoes

WHEN I was put down among the Mailu people twenty-three years ago I was delighted to find that I was to live among a seafaring crowd. My short experience on the North Sea with the men of a fleet of sailing trawlers gave me a great respect, not to say affection, for all seafaring and fishing communities.

The Mailu-speaking people had four different kinds of canoes—three economic and one fighting: (1) A single dug-out paddling and poling canoe with solid outrigger attached. Some of these of larger size but of similar construction are fitted with a removable mast which is used for the hoisting up of a sail. This whole class is called *waona*. (2) Double dug-out, but unbuilt-up, of light type, paddling and poling canoes (*gebo*). (3) Double dug-out, paddling and poling war canoes of heavier type (*bobore*). (4) Double built-up sailing canoes of heavy type (*orou*).

1. *Single Canoe* (*waona*).—This canoe, by far the most general form used by the Mailu, consists of a single dug-out, to which a float is attached, and is propelled by paddle or pole. Such canoes are much more graceful than the double dug-outs of the second class, and play so important a part in the life of the people generally that I shall try to describe them in detail.

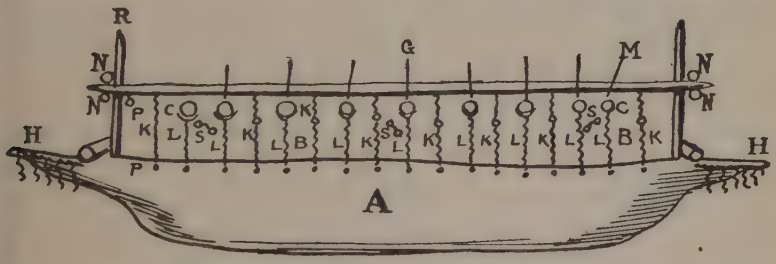
They vary a great deal in size, and are used mostly in smooth water. Some are so small that even in calm weather only one man or woman can safely travel in them. They frequently have little more than an inch of freeboard midships, in which position the traveller sits as he propels his craft. Others will carry two or more, up to eight, paddlers, while some are so heavy and have such cargo-capacity that oars are used instead of paddles; if travelling with a favourable wind, these have a mast stepped midships in the dug-out and a sail hauled up in the manner to be described under sailing canoes. The canoes of this type are individually owned. The large ones are more the property of the clan, but spoken of as owned by the headman or his son. These

owners or *gubinas* are also the *gubinas* of the ceremonial fishing-nets; these heavy single canoes are often made in order to carry these large nets. The Mailu Island man rarely, if ever, makes this type of canoe. The small ones he buys from the mainland people, for they are necessary to him at the seasons of torch-fishing. The *waona*-builders are those Mailus who formerly inhabited the coast hills round the beautiful bays and inlets on the coast opposite Mailu and those of the villages by the rivers. A certain time of the year is recognized as the *waona*-building time. The south-east trade wind has been blowing its hardest during July and August. New garden sites have been selected and the bush cut down and burned off. Planting has been done and fences made. This has meant long journeys into the bush or up near the tops of the high hills—the gardens want the evening mists and night moisture. On these journeys the native has seen suitable trees for canoe-making and has put marks on them. He is expecting spring soon, with little or no rainfall, calm nights, higher tides in the day and lower at night, calmer water over the reefs at night, and visits of certain fish in great quantities. He will want small canoes for night-fishing with torches and pronged spears.

During late spring he will have visiting to do in connection with the ceremonial feasts to come off at some of the villages. After all, if the savage has to go to "parties," why not show off his best new conveyance? To fashion the single dug-out the tree is felled, the branches from the top cut off, and a length of trunk is measured off and chopped through. This of course was formerly done with stone axes. If there is any bend, it is utilized to give the dug-out sheer, for the native likes a rise at bow and stern. About fifteen or eighteen inches from either end he makes a mark to indicate where the "digging out" shall start. He axes or adzes out a narrow groove all along, only broad enough to allow him to go deeper and outwards to the sides, maintaining an angle downwards and inwards from the two marks. Similarly the ends (*aia*) are adzed obliquely upwards from the bottom, outside, and brought to a point from the sides, terminating in a flat-topped projection at either end. The weight thus considerably reduced, the log is pulled down to the village on the shore by long strands of cane tied to each projection.

Going down the steep sides of the hills it might "take charge," unless helpers could pull back on the after-length of cane. (The tree *wai* from which most *waonas* are made prefers to grow on the hills.) If a river is handy at the bottom, it is pulled down to it, and floated to the village.

The more careful shaping and trimming takes place on the foreshore. The remainder of the outside bark is stripped and the interior still further adzed and smoothed down. Great care is taken at bow and stern, which are indistinguishable, and the oblique rise from the under surface to the produced projection is finished off. When running into a wind, this projection fore and aft, with its flat upper surface,



LARIMA DUG-OUT

A, Hull. B, Extra freeboard strake, *sipa*. G, *Larima* ends of *vea* (mast) *iado*. R, R, Rudely carved splash-boards, *birisa*. M, *Larima pou*, Sapling enclosing decking. N N, N N, Saplings' ends, enclosing ends of deck-planks. H, *Are*, Dug-out projections carrying decorations. K, Freeboard plank lashings, *sinari*. L, Cross-pole lashings, *iado sinari*. S, Knee lashings to freeboard and wash-strake, *ae sinari*. P, Splash-board lashings, *birisa sinari*

acts as a splash-board. Holes to carry decorations are bored through the projections all round their edges.

When the maker has finished the inside, to keep the sides from coming together as the canoe dries and lessen the chance of cracking, he puts, from gunwale to gunwale, wedges of short lengths of wood with notched ends. For the same reason, between the hours of labour, he covers the upper surface of his canoe with coconut leaves. From a seaweed he also makes a pigment which he rubs over the outside to preserve the wood. The dug-out is then put into a shady place, either under or beside his house, until all the other things are ready for the lashing. Such are, for instance, the float or outrigger (*larima*), selected from some light-weight wood, the same length as the dug-out, not hollowed, pointed at either end, and, whenever possible, rising slightly

fore and aft. He cuts and collects lengths of strong light wood for cross-beams (*iado*) to connect the float with the canoe. These are of equal length—four, five or six feet, according to the size of the canoe. He cuts a knob at one end of each. Then he cuts down a hard black straight-stemmed palm, strips off the hard bark and splits it down into narrow straight laths, scrapes them smooth, cuts them into required lengths of fifteen or eighteen inches, and sharpens each at one end. Another trip into the bush and he brings back a big coil of lashing material consisting of trailing vine stalk (*sinari*); this, after being soaked in water for a day or two to soften the outer rough bark, is scraped with sharpened shells. It reveals a naturally twisted cord, for all the world like a mechanically-twisted strong flax cord of three-sixteenths of an inch diameter. It is exceedingly tough, and will withstand weather, damp and salt water for a long time. After cutting a few small saplings the same length as the canoe, with knobs at each end, the builder has his material ready for the *badibadi samu*, or lashing day. He collects quantities of sago, vegetables and coconuts; his friends are called together; the women cook the food, and the *whole village* shares—a chance of getting a meal at someone else's expense!

A small *waona* will be made and lashed by a man and his son or sons without any such ceremony. But if it is a big one, most of the men of the village come to help—the villages are usually small. The canoe and float are placed parallel to one another, three or four feet apart, on as clear and level a bit of the foreshore as possible. Small holes are bored at equal distances of about three feet apart along each gunwale and opposite to one another. Just above the holes in the gunwales saplings are laid, one along each side, and on these rest the knobbed ends of the cross-beams, and they and the saplings are securely lashed to the gunwales. The knobs prevent the lashings from slipping and the beams from coming adrift. When these are all in position, the dug-out is held so that the cross-poles may be horizontal with the ground and the length of laths measured. The float ends of the cross-poles are temporarily supported in the horizontal position and the pointed laths, two pairs to each cross-pole, are then hammered into the soft-wood float. The laths of each pair cross one another at that height at which, when

the pole rests in the angle, it can maintain the horizontal position. The crossed laths in pairs do not rise perpendicularly from the float. The inner pair leans at a slight angle towards, and the outer pair at a similar angle away from, the dug-out. Thus each cross-pole rests in the angles of two pairs of crossed supports (*gini*) and is lashed into that position. In heavier canoes of this type the stability of the float is still further increased by short braces of wood thrust into the float at its inner side and produced to the cross-pole above, where each is securely tied. Two of the laths (*gini*), one at the bow and one at the stern of the float, are much longer than their fellows, and project, one forward and one aft, to carry decorations. A platform, either of small saplings or strips of palm, or sometimes of light boards, is often laid down longitudinally across the poles.

When all is ready, decorations included, and food partaken of, paddles are brought out. Old ones have been scraped or replaced by new ones. They are thrown into the dug-out, which is seized by the men, and with an accompanying chant of encouragement she is launched, the whole village looking on and criticizing the way she lies in the water. The paddlers paddle for all they are worth, and at each stroke bring the paddles against the side of the dug-out, beating time as it were for the stroke. When opposite another village, at a given signal they stop paddling, hold the paddles blade upwards and rattle the handles between the gunwales, chanting as they do so, till they wind up with three crisp ascending notes. They rest on the paddles for a while to see if the expected presents of food or small valuables will be brought out to them, and away they start again. At the home village all eyes are watching. Apparently the most unconcerned is the owner, who does not go showing off his canoe on this first day. Nor does he express his verdict on his new craft, unless it is to say where he thinks it might be improved. He might talk in approving tones about an old canoe, his own or his neighbour's, but etiquette requires that he shall say as little as possible about his new one.

When the gardens are made in different parts of the bay, as often as not the women are the paddlers, going backwards and forwards to bring produce.

The heavy and much larger single canoes are used by

the mainland folk for short distances along the coast; they are then built with the idea of stepping a mast, so that, when desired, a sail can be hoisted. The sail is made in the same way, and is of the same characteristic " lobster-claw " shape as those of the big double sailing canoes to be described later. These heavier single canoes are more easily managed and kept in order by the smaller communities than the big double sailing canoes of Mailu Island, which require bigger crews, and more man labour, than is available in the small villages. Besides, the small communities have less need for size. The heavy single ones are used for carrying the big dugong and leather-jacket nets, and when used on such fishing excursions they are generally propelled by poles. Poling is at once more silent than paddles and enables the canoe to be turned about quicker or brought to a standstill more easily.

I mentioned above the tiny little dug-outs which are capable of carrying only a single man or woman. I shall never forget the impression I got the first time I saw one in use.

It was a perfectly still evening in Millport Harbour, about half-an-hour before sunset. The water in the bay was mostly in the shade thrown upon it by the high western head at the mouth, with Pediri village perched upon the crest and the rays of the sun coming through the narrow spaces between the houses, tiny as they appeared at that height. Opposite Pediri, at the head of the bay, were the much higher Tiara Hills, and on one of these, overlooking the lime-stone precipice of its summit, was Borebo village, with its houses brilliantly lit up by the rapidly changing tints of the sinking sun. To the north-east stood the high Banaoro Hill with its single coconut summit marking the site of the old village of that name, but otherwise densely clothed with tropical forest and scrub from water's edge to crest. Against that background one could distinctly see the usual evening assembling flights of hundreds of pure white screeching cockatoos, whose cries and calls pierced the still air.

The coast hills were still lit up brightly, but the heavy thunder-clouds, not yet dispersed from behind them, turned the deeper waters of the bay, already in the shade, to dark inky blue. In contrast the shallow water over the eastern shore reef, with the last slanting rays of sun touching its unrippling surface, had an indescribable tint of pale green.

Just then, gracefully, and in perfect harmony with the surroundings, there glided into my line of vision a dug-out, a single seater, with one man in it; he was as unclothed as the Sabiribo peak overlooking him was richly apparelled in tropical wealth of foliage. He had had his afternoon dip after returning from the garden; his mop of luxuriant hair was perfectly teased out and was decorated in front with a single blossom of rich scarlet hibiscus, and from the long pointed end of his comb there swayed up and down with his every movement the white tail feathers of the hornbill. While in disgust, as it were, that such things should adorn the head of a savage human being, these very birds were flying in couples high above his head and making noisy silk-like rustling as they sped to their rest-places for the night. As the man sat amidships in his dug-out his thighs overlapped the gunwale and all but touched the surface of the water; his paddle was so noiselessly and deftly dipped and raised as to produce no sound and hardly any disturbance of the glassy water. After every second or third stroke, with an undiscernible turn of the wrist, and without bringing the blade out of the water, he turned it edge on, and kept the canoe in the direction he desired. He left in his wake only two ever-widening tiny ripples, one shorewards, one out into the bay. When he got to the edge of the reef, without a sound he exchanged paddle for pole, and standing with one foot on each gunwale, punted slowly and silently along. Then suddenly he brought the canoe to a dead standstill, put his pole down, raised his pronged spear, and poised himself in perfect readiness for the aim and throw at the approaching fish. The spear flew from that tiny platform, the pole was raised again, and he recovered his spear, now floating with a wriggling fish between its prongs. Having thrown the fish into the bottom of the dug-out, the man stood again spear in hand, like a statue watching those crystal depths. Again he is alive! The spear is balanced and thrown! He has missed!

2. *Double Light Type Canoes (gebo)*: *Economic.*—I need not weary the reader with the construction of the *gebo*. Suffice it to say that instead of the float of the *waona*, a second dug-out is used, and the cross-poles (*iado*), in this case knobbed at either end, are lashed to the second dug-out in precisely the same way as to the former. The distance between the

two dug-outs is not so much as between the dug-out and float in the first class. A platform is generally laid down over the cross-poles. This class has a greater carrying capacity than the single ones, and allows the paddlers to sit "double banked." As in the case of the single canoe, the paddler or traveller sits on that part of the cross-pole which is between the gunwales, with his feet on the bottom of the canoe inside. The space between the gunwales is so narrow that one's knees cannot rest side by side, and have to be crossed, and one's thighs overlap the gunwales, and help to keep the water out, while the cross-pole remarkably soon makes itself felt to be—well, anything but as comfortable as something possessing a wider area. These canoes always send my entire lower extremities into profound and painful slumber. It is bad enough trying to extricate your legs and feet from these things when the whole of you is awake, but when half of you, the wrong half, is sleeping, and painfully resents being awakened, it is beyond a joke—well, then perforce you must wait and try to grin and bear it.

These *gebo* are mostly used on the rivers, or in smooth water between a near island and the shore, when a number of people want to go, say, to the same garden, and there are big loads of produce to be brought home.

As in the former class, the steering is done by the paddler sitting right aft, with a paddle in no way different from the other paddles. Over shallow water, near the foreshore, or over the reef, or up the shallow parts of the river, poles are used instead of paddles. As soon as shallow water is reached, the natives put the paddles down, and one or two, standing with perfect poise and grace upon the narrow gunwales or upon the flat projections, gently propel the canoe through the water. Poling makes a restful change.

3. *Double Light Type Canoes* (*bobore*): *War Canoes*.—The old war canoes were built on the same plan as the *gebo*, last described. But they were longer, more highly decorated and built for speed. They were generally thirty-five to forty feet in length. The two dug-outs were of equal length. The projections (*are*) fore and aft were produced as far as possible with as much rake upwards as the log would permit. From each bow a curved piece of wood was fixed which carried decorations and regalia of war. The front of this projecting

curved wood bore the *toru*, or fighting mask, sometimes a shell. Bunches of cassowary feathers were tied at intervals down this wood. All along the inner and upper curve of these projections white cowrie shells were tied, and from the stern of each dug-out a pole was fixed at an angle, in the same manner as our flagstaffs, and decorations were tied to it. Tassels made from the fibrous sheathing material round the young coconut fronds dangled all round the projections at bow and stern.

No platform was laid down over the cross-poles; there they placed their long sixteen-foot spears and light soft-wood shields, and also the long poles for poling in shallow water. The warriors sat in pairs, one at either end of each of the cross-poles between the gunwales, so that the paddles were double-banked. They paddled with muffled paddles, and as there was none but human freight, except for weapons, with as many as ten or fifteen men on each side they travelled at a great speed.

The headmen of the different clan club-houses were the masters of the war canoes. The following are a few of the more important canoes of that war fleet: The Morau clan owned the *Leumanu*. The *Namename* belonged to the Maradubu clan. One of similar name belonged to Banagadubu, a sub-clan of Urumoga. The name *Namename* is taken from a point of land in the Aroma area, and I am told that all the fighting canoes of Aroma were called *Namename*. The sub-clan Banagadubu also owned another war canoe called *Pepeasi*, and the sub-clan Diadubu of the Urumoga clan owned the *Dariabu*. Bodeabo clan had two such, the *Aniwogo* and the *Karakoko*. Had this fleet all put out to sea at the same time, it would have made an impressive, not to say fear-inspiring, sight. They were built of a very light wood called *ilimo*, and they were so deep that many of the men had to stand while paddling, and others, resting one foot on the bottom of the dug-out, half sat on the gunwale.

These war canoes may be taken as typical of all such canoes used by the Mailu-speaking tribe. The villages using them were those west of Mailu Island. The confederacies among the hill Mailu mostly stood on the defensive against the more sea-going Mailu, or, if they attacked, attacked by land.

How these warships were manned and their method of attack will be told later.

CHAPTER XIII

Double Heavy Type Sailing Canoes (*Orou*)

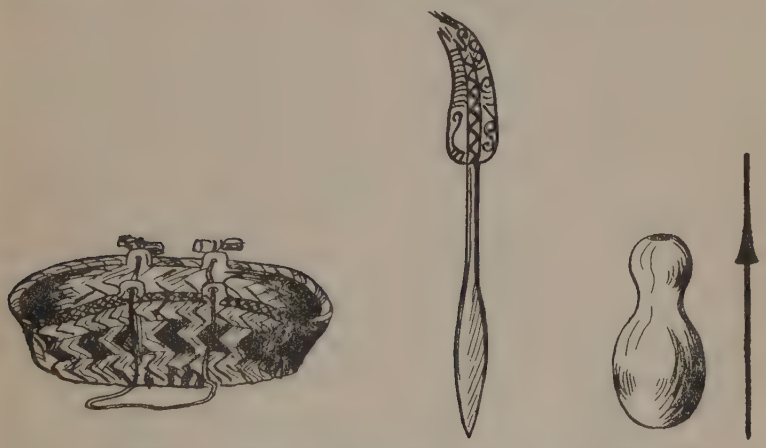
Choosing the Log—Felling—Adzing out the Log—The Master of Ceremonies—The *Deudeu Samu* (the Pulling-out Day)

THE chief owners and users of this heavy type of canoe are the Mailu Islanders, who generally have a "fleet in being" of anything from fifteen to twenty or more. They rarely fell their own logs, but buy them, ready felled and roughly adzed out, from the people of Loupomu, Laruoro and Dalava, all in the Mailu district. These people have the best knowledge of felling, are in close and continual touch with the forest, and possess the hereditary magical authority over the wood-sprites. They lived at one time on the hills at the back of the eastern part of Table Bay, where some of the finest forest-lands are situated.

I had been told that a Loupomu friend of mine had felled a fine tree, and I had asked him to let me know the pulling-out day (*deudeu samu*) from forest to river or shore, as I was anxious to go in and see the process.

First of all I wish to introduce you to this friend. Veavo is the most picturesque and perfect specimen of Mailu humanity. He is about 5 ft. 10 in. high, with broad square shoulders, and good regular features with a most pleasing expression. His hair is turning prematurely grey, but he has a perfectly upright bearing and dignified walk, with every muscle standing out distinctly on his well-moulded form; naked, except for the perineal cord. His arms are perhaps a little long, but otherwise he has limbs beautifully shaped. Hanging from one of his shoulders is his big red lime gourd, from the other a small netted bag in which he carries his lime stick or spatula, some areca-nut and betel leaves, stalk and fruit of the betel-vine. There are some tiny bundles of leaves, giving a scent the natives like, and a few bits of bark (*gobu*), cinnamon, I think, with a strong spicy smell. *Gobu* is always carried about in readiness by one who practises magic. Veavo comes of an interesting family. His father,

a Loupomu man, married a Mailu Island woman. When Veavo was a boy, a Mailu Island man killed his father, and the widow came back with her son to the island. The boy was not too young to be taught by his father the magic, accompanied by the spell, which gave authority over the wood-sprites (*tumi boi*). The widow married again, a Mailu Island man, and they had four other boys, three of whom are living, and, when these married, Veavo went back to Loupomu to be near the forest. He is renowned to-day as a quick feller and adzer of trees, and is well patronized—so well



(*Left*) NOWO BASKET; (*Centre*) LIME SPATULA; (*Right*) GOURD CONTAINING LIME, *UGARA*, WITH LIME SPATULA, *ENI*.

The above are carried in the basket, together with areca-nut and betel leaves for chewing

indeed that he is one of the very few in the district who can support two wives and eight children. He tells me that whenever, looking round for a new garden site or on a hunting expedition, he comes across a suitable tree for a canoe, he puts a mark on a buttress to signify that it is his property, as well as upon some of the trees on his way back, as a guide to him in finding the tree again.

The tree invariably used for these canoes is the *moda*, a deciduous tree with far-spreading buttresses at the foot, beautiful soft green foliage, and a small yellow flower with strong sweet scent, which at flowering time fills the forest with its perfume. The natives do not grace with the name of *orou* a canoe made from any other tree, even if its lines and

size are precisely similar, but speak of it as a *waona*, as though it were merely one of the single canoes. They give the *moda* two names, according as they speak of it in its economic capacity, or in a temporal sense to mark the time of year, when it is called *lioro*.[1] The *lioro* season is the one generally chosen for felling and adzing out a tree. The wood is semi-hard, with a good deal of sap, in colour from yellow to yellow-red, and of a pretty but not very straight grain. If water lies for any time in a hollowed-out log, it turns almost inky black.

Veavo, having put his mark upon his tree, took care to count the number of its buttresses, and went back and told his friends or near relatives. On a certain day he set out with the same number of men as there were buttresses, and by the marks and certain signs he left along the track found his way to the spot. He first assigned to each man his buttress to chop, and each man then, with his axe on his shoulder ready, watched Veavo, the *gubina* (master or owner). He held in his hand a small branch of *moda* covered with leaves, and was chewing the usual ceremonial areca-nut, betel leaves and lime, and his mouth was a mass of bright brick-red saliva. He spat this out over the branch in his hand, and gently whisked it against the tree-trunk, addressing the wood-sprites thus: "The men have come together, be favourable to us, do not split, and look upon us that the tree may fall well." Then the wood-sprites went away to make a new "village" in the top branches of another *moda*, and the men started upon the trunk with their axes, each at his own buttress. That day the tree was cut down, and the men went back to their village to sleep, while the wood-sprites settled down in their new quarters.

This spirit family consists of four: Father, *boioudu* (the *oudu* in his name is also the name of a tree which is occasionally used instead of *moda*, and from which some of the planks are made); mother, *mainodua* (*dua* is a species of pandanus); elder son, *gaubudo* (*budo* is the name of the tree from which the decking planks are usually made, and also the wide extra freeboard planks, a white, soft, but durable straight-grained wood); younger son, *geregawage*. The mother sprite came down from her tree-top "village" and bore her two sons on the beach of the seashore.[2]

The second day's work is called *gegena oipomu*—that is, chopping the upper branch-bearing part from the length of trunk required. From now on women bring food from the village, and it is cooked and eaten on the spot. On the part of the helpers no tabu is observed, except the individual tabus unrelated to the actual work in hand; but the *gubina* himself has to observe the tabu connected with the wood-sprite magic. He refrains from eating or touching any of four different kinds of fish, nor can he eat food from a pot in which at any time his magic fish has been cooked. The women bringing their food put it down at the smaller, or *gegena*, end of the log. The next day's work is called the *ubunu opi oiopa*, chopping off the body skin! This skin is called *neure*. Anyone calling at the village to see Veavo that day is told that he has gone in to do the *neure*, whereupon the visitor immediately sets out and follows Veavo's foot-prints to the spot and joins in the work.

Upon the fourth visit the log is prised over to find the best position for the top along which the "digging out" is to begin. That position is chosen which will give the "dug-out" most sheer, and is determined by the shape and not by any artificial means. The prising over is done by means of poles thrust under the log on one side and levered over as far as desired. The master of ceremonies makes a mark towards each end to show the limits within which the adzing is to be done. The day the "digging out" (*gobila*) starts is called *wawa*, and is generally in the *lioro* season. Most gangs take three months over this part of the business, for they visit the tree only spasmodically. Then it becomes a tedious affair. But Veavo tells me he is usually ready for the "pulling" day only three weeks after *wawa*. During all this time the women bring in food to the site and cook there for the men.

Just before the great day, when the dug-out is pulled out from the forest to the river or shore, the master selects the best and nearest route for the pulling track. The under scrub is cut, obstacles cleared away, and saplings laid down at short intervals across the track as "runners" (*oa*) for the rough-dressed canoe to run on. The shortest cut is made to the nearest river, or, in case none such exists, to the sea-beach. The women, too, have been specially busy in the

gardens selecting all the best kind of taro, stripping off the dead leaves, and carefully placing these on top of one another in bundles ready to carry home for the eventful day, when they will use these leaves to cover the pots of special food while cooking. They have also been cutting the leaf stalks from the tubers, which they have scraped there and then at the garden. (As a rule the tops are not cut off till the taro is actually required for cooking.) The food is all stored in the village.

The day fixed, all the neighbouring villages flock to the site. By this time the tracks are well worn. Veavo kept his promise and let me know in good time. It was a lovely clear day, but frightfully hot, and but for the gentle southerly breeze would have been almost unbearable. The female friends of the actual workers were carrying heavy loads of food as well as cooking-pots, and many of them also carried baskets of water-bottles; those from neighbouring villages also brought similar loads as a help and an encouragement. The special taro is reserved for the evening feed in the village. The women laid their burdens for some distance along either side of the track down which the canoe was to be pulled, and they were soon busy making fires and preparing food. A great bush picnic! Veavo's two wives and their lady friends had come early on the scene. A very pretty scene it was too. We had trudged three miles of that blazing soft sand beach without one leaf's shade to relieve it, we had then turned into the bush and entered into low scrub, where we got intermittent shade but not a breath of air, while the moisture rising from the ground wrapped itself about us like a hot wet blanket; we had toiled through the shadeless gardens of the Loupomu and Laruoro people. Only those who have made such a journey can measure what it means to reach the glorious cool virgin forest, with its dense shade and woodland scents.

How those laden unmurmuring women must have appreciated it! And yet on they went, with never a stop, their fingers interlaced over their heads to relieve the strain upon their necks, and stooping as far forward as possible that their backs might share the weight. I wondered what they were thinking about. I heard hardly a word spoken. I wondered if any of them thought of what was going on high

above their bowed heads, in the top branches of the tall trees. The small birds kept up a ceaseless chatter from tree-top to tree-top. Some of them were so small that they were not so big as some of the butterflies. Some were as brilliant in their plumage as others were dowdy. Some had deep-throated notes and others a succession of high-noted trills. There were the whip-bird, with its unmistakable note exactly like the cracking of a whip, and the ugly, impatient squawking of the bird-of-paradise, as Wallace describes it, *Wawk-wawk-wawk-wok-wok-wok*, ubiquitous and seemingly tireless in its activity. There were hundreds of white screeching cockatoos, and every now and then the great black hornbill with heavy head and ponderous beak, with bright red cheeks, its only bit of colour from slate-black crest to tail-tip, would sound that shrill whistle of his, so strangely unexpected from such a huge nutcracker jaw.

Wood-pigeons, ground-pigeons, gorgeous-coloured paraquets and innumerable other birds, large and small, all seemed excitedly alive to the occasion. They might well be; it is not every day that their haunts are disturbed by so many human visitors. Besides, it was spring with them, as with the people who were disturbing them. As the faithful lover of the Papuan bush, the hornbill was dancing attendance everywhere upon his mate, both of them in their spring clothes of nestling silk, and with heads on one side they looked down on us out of those huge eyes of theirs and then rustled their garments once again and "cleared." At one spot on that lovely track through the forest the path went out of its way to get round a big mound of earth and twigs. It was about five feet high, and the diameter of its circle twelve to fourteen feet; the birds, for it was a nest, were not there that morning, though I have frequently seen them hard at work scratching up the earth and twigs from the surrounding ground and for ever thus enlarging their communal nest. They dig holes in the top of the mound and, having laid their eggs in them, fill them up carefully with twigs, earth and leaves, and leave the heat of the decaying matter to hatch the eggs. My native friends tell me that the young birds come out fully fledged. They certainly have a plentiful supply of food, as these mounds are generally full of ants and small beetles. The bird is what we call here a

"scrub hen," not so large as our domestic fowl, a rich brown in colour, with a small tuft of feathers on its head, and bright red, long, powerful legs with strong claws. It is tough eating, but its eggs, about the size of goose eggs, and of terra-cotta colour, are very rich. The scrub turkey is rarer, but has the same manner of building its nest, and leaves nature to hatch the eggs.

After this digression we will return to Veavo. He could not wait to accompany us. He had too much to see to that morning, and had to be too early on the scene. How could Veavo ever live on Mailu Island? Not that he lives now in the forest, but he lives nearer and loves it. The wood-sprites missed him; they called him to keep up his family tradition. The "Call of the Wild," who could resist it?

Everybody was good-humoured—except on the beach. We were certainly not alone though Veavo's party had gone much earlier. As we went along the men picked small branches of brightly variegated leaves. They had no burdens to carry. These leaves stuck out in festoons from their armlets, waved and nodded from all round their waistbands as they walked, and hung in streamers from their wrists, knees and ankles; croton leaves or bright flowers ornamented their hair, till we began to look like a walking hedge of variegated leaves winding its way through the forest. A clearing! We had arrived at the spot. Hot? Phew! Veavo came and shook hands. He looked almost as dignified as the forest trees themselves. About him, as about the whole company, especially when thus decked out with spoils of the forest, there seemed nothing out of harmony. His wives and lady friends had a huge fire by the side of the dug-out. They had prepared and roasted a great bundle of sago, two huge bunches of bananas, and scraped a long "stick"[3] of coconuts. Veavo himself distributed this roasted food among his immediate helpers, for whom it was provided. He took none himself. Groups were clustered around the pots, by now ready cooked. Veavo took none. Nor did he drink a drop of water. I did.

I noticed that the long rope was already attached to the smaller end of the dug-out. It was not a made rope from the village, it was just a long bit of the forest itself, one of those wonderful tough streamers which hang from the topmost

branches, right down to the ground. They stand a great strain.

Although Veavo was the master, his voice was heard least in giving final instructions, nor did he once touch the canoe. Indeed he stood apart, and yet no one could mistake him: he was the master right enough. Everyone understood his position, and did what they knew he would do, if he dared.

He subsequently told me that, if he had eaten or drunk anything, or had touched the canoe that day, the pulling would not have been successful; the canoe would have stuck, and probably it would have been there till it rotted! But Veavo *did* do something, and it was because he refrained from all fussiness that more dignity was imparted to his command.

Men fell into their places at the rope (*tutu*). The master's nearest male relative took up his station at the end next the canoe. He was to lead the pulling song. When all was ready, after a great deal of talk on the part of some as to where they should hold, and the best way to pull, Veavo took a leafy branch of *moda* in his hand, and, having ceremonially "chewed," and anointed the branch with ceremonial saliva, whisked the leaves three or four times on the dug-out just where the *tutu* was fastened, and said in chanting fashion:

"*Boi Oudu ma leuai.*"
"Spirit Oudu charm."

"*Boi Gaubudo Geregawage ma leuai.*"
"Spirits Gaubudo Geregawage charm."

"*Gaubudo ma leuai.*"
"Spirit Gaubudo charm."

Spitting again on the leaves he threw them away in the direction of the other end—the forest end. This little speech and action was to bid farewell to the wood-sprites, and was repeated, as long as they were still in the forest, every time the pullers started again after short intervals of rest. Immediately thereafter the nearest male relative started the song of encouragement for the pullers. In the song he gave the canoe its name, the hereditary canoe name of the owner, or the owner to be. In a melodious voice, and in perfect tune with all surrounding sounds, this man sang the first line,

ending on a higher note as a guide to the others to join in with their deep sonorous chorus note and mock pull:

"*Eva orou ne bo gai ne da iniba.*"
"This canoe (*emphatic*) end don't stick"

("*Gai ne*"=term of reproach. Much as we should say, "Whatever you do.")

(All together)

"*Aiooo . . . Ai . . ., Ai . . :, Aieniba.*"

At each *Aiooo. . .* or *A . . . i* all the pullers, in perfect time, fell back on the rope, with a mock pull first, then with increased strength, till *Aieniba* (come), when a much stronger pull was given and the canoe came forward a bit with a jerk.

The leader sang the second line and mentioned the canoe by name:

"*Eva orou ne 'Avareasi' bo gai ne da iniba!*"
"This canoe (*called*) 'Avareasi' end (*reproach*) don't stick."

"*Aiooo. . . A . . . i, A . . . i, Aieniba!*"

To encourage still further, and work them up to pull alongside of him near the end of the dug-out, he sang again:

"*Lepa bo ne mana e saea,*"

(Name of part to which rope is attached) empty (without anyone.)

"*Aiooo . . . A . . . i, A . . . i, Aieniba!*"

(Practically, "Coming, coming, come!")

"*Gana gubina ne oisi bega va maresa.*"
"Your owner (*emphatic*) name of taro leaves already faded."

"*Aiooo . . . A . . . i, A . . . i, Aieniba!*"

"*Gana gubina ne tebele bega va maresa.*"
"Your owner (*emphatic*) taro leaves already faded."

"*Aiooo . . . A . . . i, A . . . i, A . . . i, Aieniba!*"

With a sustained strong pull this time the canoe slipped over the runners on the track, while the pullers, with loud, throaty but harmonious note, sang the "glad song":

"*Ama dae daea madi*
Dae aao bobomu! bomu! bobomu! bomu! bomu!"

If these last words ever had a meaning, it is entirely lost. But how flat and pointless the whole song and words seem on paper! And yet as a matter of fact this last part of the ceremony is inspiring, and the man, whoever he is, black or white, who can hear, unmoved, that sonorous "*A . . . i*," "*Aieniba*," or that savage native "glad song" from forty or fifty or more strong male voices, with its accompanying rush through the bush, well—he must be like the dug-out that "sticks."

Arrived at the river, the canoe was tied to the trees on the bank to wait for further shaping. Visitors dispersed to their several villages, and there recounted the doings of the day with many a burst of laughter over some of the trips, falls and amusing incidents along that temporary forest track.

The workers proper went back to their village with Veavo, where the women had prepared the feast of "taro," the "*oisi*" taro mentioned in the song of encouragement, and whose "already faded leaves" formed the lid of the pot.

NOTES

[1] See Chapter VIII.
[2] See Chapter X.
[3] So called from the way in which they are carried.

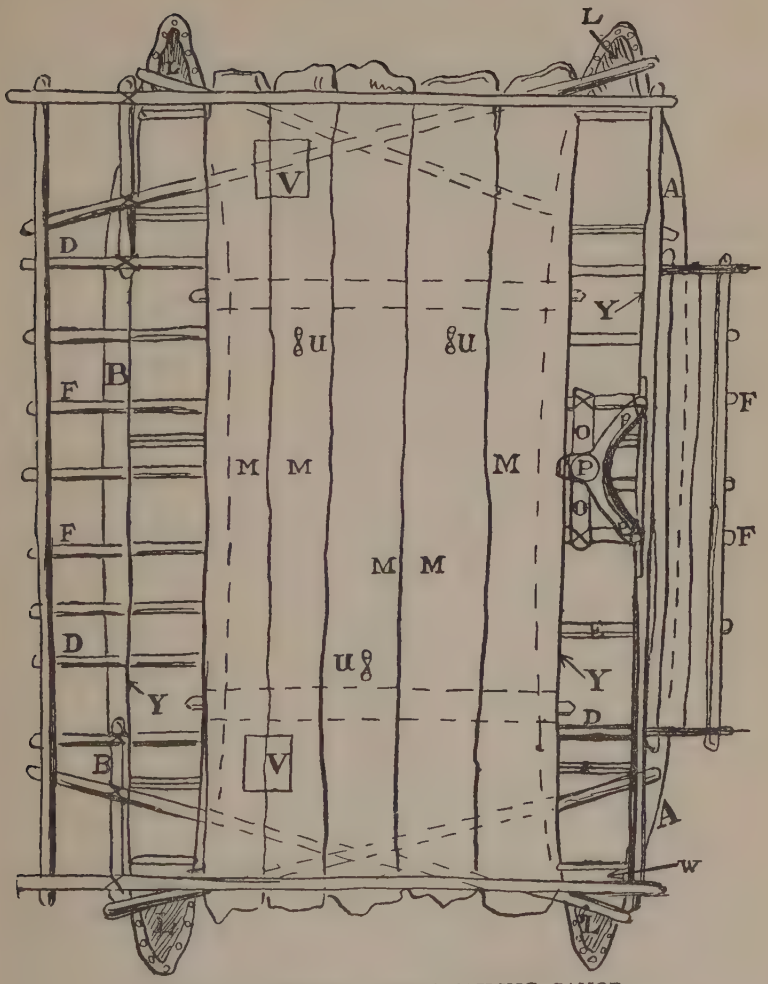
CHAPTER XIV

Double Sailing Canoes

Construction—The Decking—Lashing-together Day—Mast & Rigging—Sail & Sail-making—Running Tackle—Sailing—Mooring & Method

TWO dug-outs of *moda* wood, as described in our last chapter, are required for each *orou* (double sailing canoe). But *moda* is treacherous; the core of a splendid-looking tree is often rotten, with a large hole running right through the centre of the trunk. Yet such logs are used, unless too bad. When the adzing-out is done, the decayed part is cut away at bow and stern and a small healthy log of the same wood is shaped and forced into each cavity, to make such a perfect fit that when adzed inside and out it is difficult to detect that a piece has been let in. I always had the idea that such ends were more durable than those of a completely healthy log, and I was glad to have it confirmed by the best native authorities; however healthy the natural core may seem, it is always the first part to go and start a leak. The Mailu Islanders buy the dug-outs from people who live near the forests, and do the final adzing down at home.

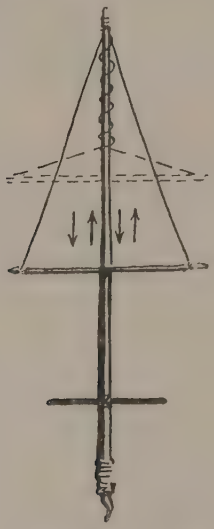
After a man has his two dug-outs ready, an immense amount of labour is required to gather all the necessary parts. He must collect the cross-poles (*iado*) to join the two dug-outs together; four long, extra freeboard planks, or strakes (*sipa*), anything from a foot to two feet wide; decking planks (*wawau*), numbers of saplings to enclose the platform and the ends of the cross-poles, twelve naturally bent knees (*ae*) to keep the freeboard planks in place, four rudely ornamented splash-boards, one for either end of each dug-out; great quantities of lashing vine and cane for tying purposes and for rigging; to say nothing of all the rope for halyards and mainsheets. A canoe that was new throughout would be a rarity. By that I mean that two entirely new dug-outs are rarely put together for the one canoe. An old dug-out is generally used for the outrigger (*larima*) of a new canoe, and the new one is used for the canoe proper (*tauna* or *orou aura*)—that is, the one



OROU, OR DOUBLE HEAVY SAILING CANOE

A, *Orou* dug-out. B, *Larima* dug-out (outrigger). D, *Mareva* (rudder) *iado*. F, *Vea* (mast) *taru*. M, *Wawau* (decking). P, *Vea* (mast). U, *Wawau laroai* (deck-lashing). V, *Kau* (fireplace). W, *Isana wawari* (plank seat for steersman). Y, *Sipa* (freeboard strakes)

over which the mast is stepped. The bottom edges of the freeboard planks are adzed to fit the eccentricities of the gunwales on which they rest. The planks are made from much softer wood than the dug-outs. When all the hull parts are ready, a day is appointed for lashing (*badibadi*). On a suitable part of the beach near the owner's house the two dug-outs are placed parallel to one another, with a space of about four or five feet between their inner gunwales. They measure thirty to thirty-five feet, sometimes more, in length. Small holes are adzed out at intervals along the



A NATIVE DRILL
(See p. 155)

whole length of the gunwales of each. The almost rectangular knees are placed in three pairs and lashed in position, one pair amidships, and one pair towards either end; one limb of each knee goes from gunwale to gunwale, and the other limb of each stands up almost perpendicularly from each gunwale. The wide freeboard strakes are placed on edge along the gunwales against the upstanding limbs of the knees, and within the line of holes. A pair of holes is made through the strake against each knee for lashing to the knee. The strakes are also lashed down to the gunwales, by bringing the lashings right over the upper edge of the strake and also through holes bored through the centre of

the plank. These particular lashings are called *sinari*. The ends of the strakes are enclosed by the inner sides of the ornamented splash-boards (*birisa*), to which they are lashed. The bottom edge of the *birisa* in each case stands perpendicularly upon the flat projection (*are*), just in front of the point where the hollowing-out started.

Two tenoned poles (*lurau*), of equal length, are mortised into the two inner freeboard strakes, one fore and one aft, and the two dug-outs forced as near together as the tenons will allow; and to keep the dug-outs firmly in that position until all the lashing is done, they enclose the two *ares* in a noose of strong rope and then twist the noose up upon itself by means of a pole, which is then made fast. The object of these two tenoned poles is an important one, and I think it shows the mechanical ingenuity of the people as little else does. Their object is to keep the dug-outs equidistant from one another, and to prevent them coming together in a sea-way, and thus to relieve the tremendous strain upon the lashings. The tenoned poles are mortised into holes in the median line of the strakes, so as not to get in the " road " of the cross-poles thrust through holes opposite one another in all four strakes, and towards their upper edges. These poles not only form the beams on which the decking rests, but help to keep the two dug-outs in position, and to fix the freeboard strakes firmly down on the gunwale. The holes through which these transverse poles are thrust alternate with the strake lashings (*sinari*) mentioned above, and they are as nearly as possible in perpendicular line with the holes in the gunwales, down to which the poles are firmly lashed (*iado sinari*) both inside and outside the planks.

The transverse poles are produced about two feet beyond the outside strake on the outrigger side. On the *orou* side only the central four, sometimes five, are similarly produced, the others on this side are cut off as near the strake as the lashings will allow. I will point out the reason for this later on. The pair of transverse poles farthest fore and aft have nothing to do with the platform, but act as braces to keep the two dug-outs in the same horizontal plane in a sea-way, and to do for the actual dug-outs themselves what the tenoned poles do for the upper works. One end of each pole of the bracing pairs (*bona iado*) is thrust through holes

in each strake on one side at an angle downwards and forwards so that the other end may rest on, and be lashed to, the *are* (projection) of the other dug-out. When all the cross-poles (*iado*) are in position, the lashing of them starts. A number of men stand in the dug-out itself, and others in line along either side of each dug-out. Enclosing saplings (*pou*) are then lashed longitudinally to the ends of the cross-poles, below and above. This completes the public lashing.

The owner's wife and the wives of all his relatives and connections have meanwhile been very busy preparing and cooking food. Two or three pots of food are given to the actual workers, and three pots each to the different clans in the village, which divide up their shares according to the number of houses. That is why I used the expression "public lashing." As far as they can, the community makes everything an occasion for getting food. The owner of the canoe does very little at this stage to the canoe. His time is fully occupied in collecting food for the day, when he has to give a taste to every man, woman and child in the village. After this he has to proceed pretty much on his own with the help of his son or sons (when they feel like it) and his other near male kin. After laying down the platform boards and lashing them in places, and enclosing their ends between saplings (*abaaba*), he lays down and lashes a heavy log (*vea dabe*) between the strakes on the *orou* side, longitudinally across the transverse poles, generally the two centre ones, or, if a big canoe, the three central ones. The mast (*vea*) is stepped on this.

But meanwhile he goes across to the mainland, and if it is very calm weather he temporarily steps the mast, fixes up the rigging, and goes across in the canoe itself to do the caulking (*kaiso*). The caulking material consists of scraped bark (*kaiso*) from a tree also bearing that name. He strips off some of the bark and then scrapes off the inner red surface of it with a shell. When he has got sufficient of it, he rolls it up in his hands, moistened with salt water, and completely fills up all spaces between surfaces on the gunwale and where the strakes butt up against the *birisas*, and all the lashing holes along the gunwale and in the *birisas* as well as where the *birisas* stand upon the *ares* (projections). The *kaiso* soon gets very hard and sticks firmly to the wood.

Two shorter planks are lashed on to the produced poles on the *orou* side. This narrow platform serves two purposes: firstly, at either end it is enclosed on the upper surface by a curved piece of wood the outer projection of which, facing the sea, is carved to represent the head of a bird; the neck of the rudder rests on this bird's curved back (*mareva oa*); secondly, the platform forms a stage on which to stand when pulling up the sail.

No platform is built on the produced poles on the outrigger side, but longitudinally across them and between the saplings are laid the long oars and poles for poling the canoe over shallow water, and the rolled-up roofing material. Nor is the space between the freeboard strakes decked in; it is kept free of encumbrance that goods may be let down into the dug-outs, and bailing done when necessary.

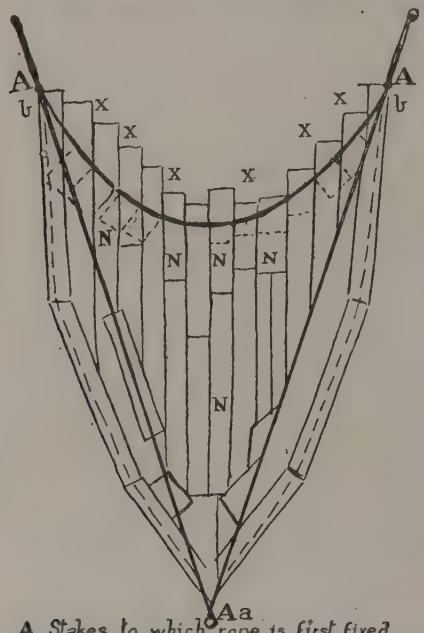
The mast consists of a strong sapling (*oailo*), with the butt-ends of its lateral roots (four when possible) allowed to remain. The mast is lashed down by these short lateral projections. A hole is made through the mast near the top, and the under surface of the hole smoothed to take the main halyards. The lawyer-cane rigging (*gogu*) is fastened to the mast just above the hole, and the top of the mast nicely finished off. The rigging consists of several strands of cane twisted.

The lower ends of these shrouds are turned back on themselves to form a loop and are bound. Other strands of the same strong cane are threaded through the loop of both fore and aft rigging, these again are turned back on themselves and twisted into a very strong rope of cane, and their ends are securely tied to two short saplings (*gogu eva*), one fore and one aft of the outrigger dug-out to windward of the outer freeboard strake. The outrigger dug-out is always to windward. The mast is stepped amidships of the *orou* dug-out.

The women of the household have been busy for a time plaiting narrow strips of matting, about twelve, fifteen or twenty feet long and twelve or fifteen inches wide. The material used for plaiting is a grass-like flowering rush with a three-sided stem, got from the river banks. It is split down, the wider strands being used for sail-matting and the narrower for house-mats. No other material is used for sail-matting. Thirty or forty such strips are got ready

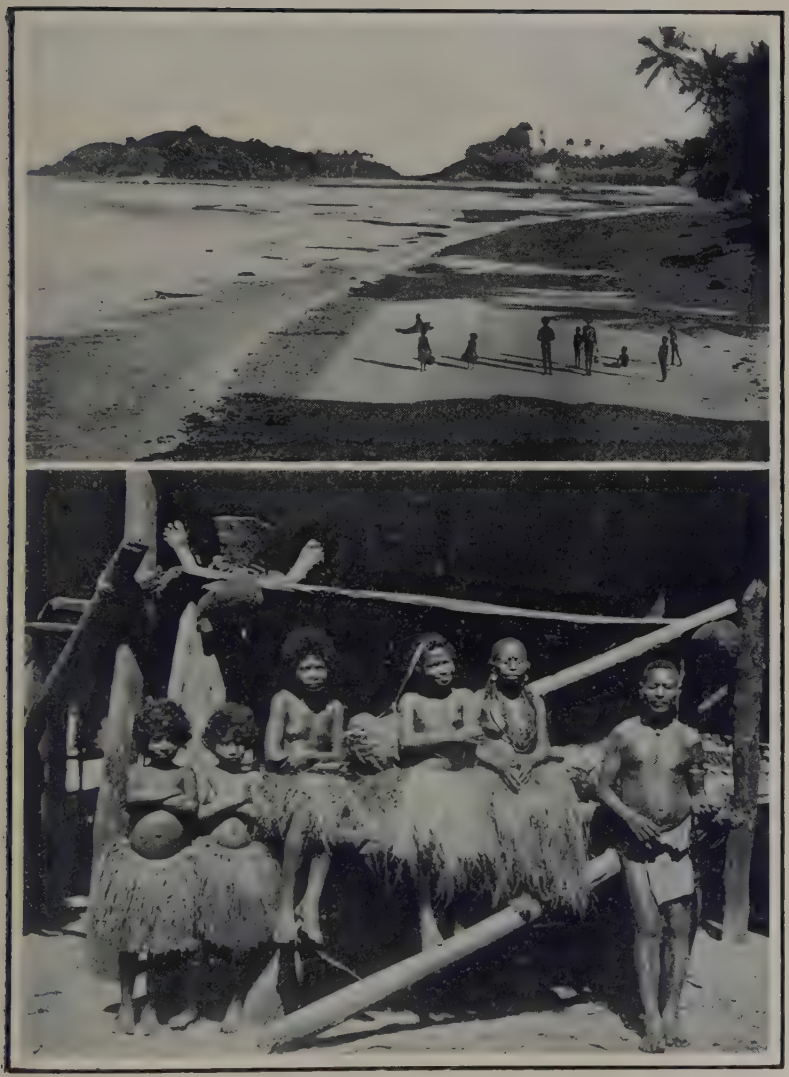
by the women; then the men have nothing to do but sew the strips together to make the sail.

Three strong stakes are firmly thrust into the hard street to form an almost perfect isosceles triangle. One side is very slightly shorter than the others; the reason for this is that the peak of the gaff which floats free in the breeze may be a bit lower than the peak of the gaff which is attached to the mast. They speak of the shorter side as belonging



A Stakes to which rope is first fixed.
Aa Foot of Sail. XXX Curve, "Ilo"
b.b. Peaks of Sail; "Gege" NNN, Strips of matting; "Eba".

to the lower peak (*auna gege*). One continuous well-made rope is placed round the three stakes, the two ends being brought down to the stake at the apex of the triangle. The strips of matting are then laid down flat on the street, their ends and sides under the rope so as to form what will be the approximate shape of the sail when finished—that is, at the sides the strips are some distance outside the line of the rope, and at the top of the sail (the base of the triangle) the ends of the strips are arranged to take the approximate curve of the " claw." The base-line part of the rope is then



MAILU ISLAND.

The tide coming in over the reef.

A VILLAGE GROUP.

Note the feet of the old woman sitting on the platform in the shade.

GIVING THE PIG HER EVENING MEAL

Whoever else goes hungry the pig must not do so. The food is served in the half of a large clam shell.

HEAD SHAVING AND CHIROPODY

Both operations are performed with flakes of obsidian.

brought down sufficiently far to allow enough for the graceful curve. A noose is made in the rope at the base angle stakes and another temporary rope put through the noose, and this latter rope is securely fastened to a stake in the produced straight line of the sides of the triangle. The two ends of the main rope at the apex are then drawn very tight and made fast to the apex stake.

At the same time ten or a dozen men, standing on the strips of matting round what will be the "claw," draw the ends of the strips back and over the rope, thus stretching it as far as it will come, and then place their feet upon the turned-over ends to keep them in position until they are all satisfied that the curve is as it should be. If it is found that some of the ends overlap too much, these are released, while other men pull on the other end farther down the sail. Great strain is exercised on the rope in pulling these ends over. When quite satisfied that the curve is right, two men, ready with needle and inner-bark thread, each starting from the centre, make a running stitch just on the inner side of the rope to each peak of the sail. This is always the first part of the sail to be stitched, and is looked upon as the all-important part, in which considerable pride is taken and upon which the closest criticisms are made after the sail is finished. The curve finished, and the rest of the strips in position, the men turn round and with needles and bark thread make running stitches down the seams and across the joins. At all the seams there is an overlap of about two inches. Strain is then put upon the side ropes, already tight, by pulling them out to the curve of the side strips of matting, and the edges are brought over and a running stitch put down either side. Sometimes pegs driven into the hard street are used to keep the claw curve of the encircling rope in position, but the more general method is that described above.

I wonder how many times I have been asked by foreigners: "Why do they make their sails with the crab-claw tops?" All I can reply is, as the native himself would reply to such a direct question: "Because the ancestors made them that way." According to folk-lore one ancestor was Mailuula. He it was who first started using the *orou*, and the story goes that, after sitting down and scratching different designs

upon the village street, he decided upon the one now used, and his wife, Mailuoura, forthwith went to the Bailebo and got the rush from which to plait the strips of matting. But that is a digression.

The two angles at the base, the peaks (*gege*) of the finished sail, are further strengthened by being bound with the fibrous sheathing material from the young coconut-leaf butt. The loops at the base angles are eventually cut to make lashings for tying the sail peaks to the peaks of the gaffs. At intervals all down the two sides small pieces of the same strong fibrous material are doubled over the edge of the sail and sewn in position; these are to take the sail lashings, which consist of short lengths of thinner rope tied round the sail edge. The small pieces of fibrous material answer the same purpose as our extra pieces of canvas sewn on to our sails to support the places where we want to put eyelets. The thread used consists of flat strands of the inner fibrous bark of the wild cotton shrub, a tree of the Malvaceae order. The natives make all their rope from this. The strands themselves consist of layer upon layer of this fibrous material, so that a strand of any fineness is obtained by paring off the layers.

Each of the two gaffs (*isau*) is made of two long saplings bound together, splicing fashion, to get the required length. A gaff of one piece would be far too heavy at one end or not strong enough at the other. They are not shaped to take the curve of the sail; their own weight and suppleness, and the shape of the sail, give them the curve when hoisted. When the gaffs are ready they are taken on to the canoe and placed in position, from *birisa* to *birisa*, on each dug-out, and rest in the notches on the heads of those boards until required. They are much longer than the canoe itself. When the gaffs and sail are ready, and if the owner has made the rope for the halyards, on a suitable day he carries the sail to the canoe at its moorings and pulls it up to "bend" it (*laealaea goragora*).

The rudder (*mareva*) is cut out from the side of an old dug-out, and in consequence generally has some convexity about its widest part. It is anything from ten to fifteen feet long and twenty inches across its greatest width; it tapers in towards the neck and again broadens out into a circular

head. Two holes are bored through it, one near each edge of its broadest part, and through each of these a piece of rope is threaded and tied on itself to make a noose. The helm (*dora*), consisting of a long pole, is thrust through these nooses as soon as the rudder is shipped into position —that is, with its neck resting edgeways on to the *mareva oaoa*—and securely lashed there; the rudder lies obliquely with its broad surface against the side of the dug-out. The steersman stands on the *are* (projection), with one hand holding the perpendicular helm, and pushes it out or pulls it in according to the direction in which he wants his vessel to travel; his other hand holds the *birisa* for support. The rudder is unshipped upon coming to a mooring, and allowed to float with its neck rope attached to some part of the canoe. When the canoe is under way, the rudder acts as lee board.

If the owner is going to use the canoe, the sail is brought out from the house, unrolled, and laid along the deck, and the two gaffs laid along its sides. The peaks and the foot of the sail are attached first, the man having to stand in the shallow water to do it, then the lashings are tied all the way along. The gaffs have knobs (*loulou*) at their heavier ends to prevent any slipping of the rope that keeps them near together at the foot. The end of another longer rope is attached to the foot to bring it down to the base of the mast, where it is made fast.

The main halyards (*deudeu oraora*) are tied to the centre of the longer gaff, and two long ropes attached to the centre of the other; one of these ropes is to act as mainsheet (*atae*), and the other as guy (*loroiri*), to prevent any possibility of the sail jibbing. The sail is pulled up by three or four men standing on the short platform outside the mast, who fling themselves outwards and downwards, thus raising the sail in jerks. A man at the foot of the mast pulls in the slack. The sail rises in a horizontal position, and other men on the canoe raise the lower gaff and push up the foot to take off some of the weight. When the upper gaff has got as high as it will go, the foot is brought down and made fast to the foot of the mast. The main halyards are made fast to the cross-poles between the two *orou* strakes. The rudder is shipped, the mainsheet pulled in, and the canoe is under way.

When tacking, they go " about ship " (*doedoe*) by letting

go the mainsheet; the sail hangs out free over the water in the breeze, the rudder is unshipped and dragged by its neck rope through the water to the other end of the short platform, where it is shipped again; what was the guy now becomes the mainsheet and vice versa, and what was the bow of the ship now becomes the stern; the mainsheet is pulled in and the vessel gets under way on the other tack. They have gone "about ship" without the ship going about! In a fresh breeze they will travel at eight miles an hour. In a very stiff blow they shorten sail by undoing the lashings some distance up from the foot of the sail, and reef that part by rolling it up into a spiral. To further shorten sail they reduce the peaks (*gege*), and the sail looks as though it had a square top. When the wind is blowing very hard indeed, and from behind, the halyards are made fast to the foot of the sail without any gaffs and, the foot drawn right up, poles are tied across the sail like yards, to spread it out.

In dead calm the canoe is propelled with oars always carried on board. Nooses of cane or rope are twisted upon themselves to form a double noose; one of these is thrown over the end of one of the cross-poles and the oar handle thrust through the other so as to improvise a rowlock in the simplest way. The oars (*goga*) rest on the enclosing saplings (*pou*). The rowing is more of a jerk than a pull. When going over shallow water on the reef the canoe is propelled by long poles. It is also moored by these poles, one being forced down into the sand beach at an angle, and another in the shallow water to seaward. The mainsheets are used to tie the canoe to them, leaving plenty of rope to allow the canoe to move in the water. At a mooring away from home at night, shelter is provided by roofing in the deck with a thatch carried for the purpose and rolled up in bundles when not in use. A ridge-pole is rigged up by tying it to three short poles they set up on the bottom of the hulls, leaning inwards against the inner strakes. The lower ends of the thatch rest on the gaffs laid down from *birisa* to *birisa*. A fireplace is made at either end of the canoe upon laths of palm covered with clay and sand. A Mailu traveller practically never sleeps ashore when away from home. When wind conditions are favourable, I myself prefer these canoes to any other lodging.

All the big sailing canoes are named, and they perpetuate the individual ancestral canoe name. Many of the names are taken from their ancestral bits of land or from certain points or rocks on the coast to which they suffix a bird name. Such names are, for instance, "Bauro moga" (*Bauro*, owner's land on Mailu Island; *moga*, small black heron found there); "Batu anave" (*Batu*, Table Point; *anave*, small white sea-bird of Batu); "Bunama gai" (the crow of *Bunama*, a point on the eastward coast); "Badisiai" (the *Badi*, bird-of-paradise). Each canoe carries a decoration or flag as its designation.

The owner or owners of the canoes are those who have purchased both or either of the dug-outs. One man may be owner of the *orou* dug-out and another man that of the outrigger dug-out, but they will be near relatives of the same clan, and the owner of the *orou* dug-out will be the one more frequently spoken of as owner of the canoe. There is a communal use of the canoe, however, within the sub-clan. I think I am right in saying (for I have not seen or heard of any other) that the Mailu *orou* is the only permanent, built-up, double sailing canoe on the south coast of British Papua. By this I do not mean that other peoples have no sailing canoes, or that theirs are less skilfully built. But I do doubt whether any other sailing canoes possess the same amount of utility. The Port Moresby natives share with Mailu the crab-claw design of sail, but, I believe, use such sails on only one particular trip in the year, the "Hiri," when they rig them on huge dug-outs of soft wood, lashed together as huge rafts, and dismantled again upon the return from the "Hiri." On the other hand, the great sailing canoe of the Mailu man is in almost daily use, and so much is it a part of his very life that he is lost without it.

Some time ago I was watching one of these canoes labouring in a frightfully heavy sea and strong wind. I saw they were trying to go "about" and managing so poorly that I ran down and asked two watching natives what the trouble was. They told me that it was insufficiently "manned" and it was a borrowed canoe from Loupoma. There were only two men, a woman and three little children on board, they said. Next time I looked, no mast or sail was visible, the canoe had capsized and was turned completely upside

down. With the glass we could see the distressed people clinging to the upturned bottoms, and in a few minutes a loin-cloth was seen tied to the end of a pole as a signal of distress. They were then being drifted rapidly away, and we sent out the whale-boat with a big and strong crew. Next day we learned that it got to them only just in time, as they were finding it hard to cling on with a heavy sea beating over them and their bodies shivering with the cold. The crew of the whale-boat got the shipwrecked people on board, and then some of them went and hacked the two dug-outs apart, and, fastening a rope to one of them, towed it to the nearest bit of land, a sandbank, and pulled it up, then took the shipwrecked crew to Loupomu for the night. Capsizes mostly occur through encountering a sudden and extra heavy puff of wind when they cannot let out the mainsheet quickly enough. In this case the main dug-out had got filled with water, the crew not being big enough to bail out. The outrigger dug-out had got on to the crest of a huge wave while they tried to pull in the mainsheet, and over went the great clumsy thing.

In true sailor fashion there is nothing on our savage sailor's canoe but has its reason for being there, and therefore bears its own particular name. The following list gives the number of different named parts that I am aware of, without duplicating those names that belong in common to each side, *orou aura* or *larima aura*. As we talk of "port" or "starboard," so he talks of *orou* or *larima* side, *orou* being the greater dug-out and showing the mast stepped upon it. *Orou* side is always leeward, *larima* side is always to windward:—

Hull group (*orou* and *larima*), fourteen named parts.
Deck group (*wawau*), with movables belonging to that group, fifty-two.
Rudder (*mareva*) group, nine named parts.
Mast (*vea*) group, eleven named parts.
Rigging (*gogu*) group, five named parts.
Spar (*isau*) group, eight named parts.
Sail (*laea*) group, sixteen named parts.
Total named parts of double sailing canoe, one hundred and fifteen.

CHAPTER XV

Mailu Potters & their Pottery

"This earthen jar
A touch can make, a touch can mar;
. . . . . .
To-morrow the hot furnace flame
Will search the heart and try the frame,
And stamp with honour or with shame
These vessels made of clay."

LONGFELLOW, *Keramos*.

POTTERY is the biggest industry on Mailu Island. Only women and girls engage in it. The food supply of the community largely depends upon it. The Mailu-speaking people generally, and their nearer neighbours, prefer boiled food. Their own way of expressing it is: "We like gravy." Not far back from the coast, however, I have visited villages, hostile in character and isolated in position, which still mostly cook their food by heated stones, though even among them, through their nearest coast neighbours, Mailu pottery is more and more finding its way. No coast village to-day employs the hot-stone method of cooking. Mailu Islanders, or mainland people who have emigrated from Mailu, are the only potters, and only Mailu Island clay is used, in spite of the fact that much better clay could be found on the mainland. The demand for these pots is steadily maintained, and they can be found in every village of the district.

I think that pottery on Mailu Island exhibits the highest form of art among the Mailu-speaking people. Mr Marett, in his useful little work on *Anthropology*, in the Home University Library, says: "I should say that culture depends on social organization; social organization on numbers; numbers on food; and food on invention. Here both ends of the series are represented by spiritual factors—namely, culture at the one end, and invention at the other." We can most appropriately apply to our Mailu people the two-fold aspect in which the same writer views social organization—namely, "primarily, it is an organization of the food

quest," and " hardly less fundamentally, it is an organization of marriage."

I am not going into the question as to whether it was the Mailu Islanders' isolated position and the unproductive character of the island soil which inspired his invention; I think not. I think he brought his invention with him, and settled where there was clay. As an immigrant to the mainland he shows himself to great disadvantage as agriculturist and gardener.

The Mailu Islanders are a closely compact food group, and the invention they use, whenever and wherever they got it, has been the means of maintaining the community at a certain level of population. History seems to show that as soon as the island population has risen above that level of numbers, certain sections have broken away and formed communities on the mainland. The people themselves talk of these breakings-away as having been brought about by quarrels—food quarrels, I should imagine, from my experience.

Where a native community such as ours is largely dependent on an industry like pottery for the purchase of its food, the relation of that industry to the number of population it maintains is interesting and important. In 1901 I took the census of Mailu Island village at 547; in 1909 it was 567, and in 1920, 541. That means some increase, for between the last two dates a number of emigrants went from Mailu to Kurere village and some to Loupomu village, while an entirely new village was built at Gagaisana. These emigrations often happen because the eldest son of a Mailu family goes to settle near his deceased mother's land while the younger brothers keep up the father's line on Mailu. Between 1880 and 1890 one whole clan left Mailu Island through a quarrel and settled in Baxter Bay. That was the Oraedo clan, and their new village is known either as Oraedo, or Boru, after the name of the land they are on.

Behind the Mailu Island village there is an extensive flat (as far as anything can be extensive on Mailu), covered with tall rank sword-grass, four feet high. The whole of the flat is clay, and the village water-hole is in the centre. Not long ago I went to see the clay-pits again. I walked over several without knowing it!

They belong to the owners of the land wherein the pits

MAILU POTTERY

Starting at the top of the page and reading from left to right, the designs on the pots are as follows:—*Aisava*, frigate bird, and inside the rim a crinkled coconut leaf. *Visisia*, or shield pattern. (*Centre*) Variant of the *Kamuruku* design taken from Massim canoes. (*Left*) *Kamuruku*. (*Right*) *Doni Batuna*, lizard-tail. (*Below, left*) *Aoda Laea*, foreign sail. (*Right*) *Nogara Idalele*, clouds standing in line. (*Below, left*) *Bau*, taken from bamboo knife. (*Centre*) *Adivi*, ceremonial adze pattern. (*Right*) *Elaki*, design found on most Massim sleeping-mats and property

are dug. The owners exercise their proprietary rights when they choose, especially when their good humour is disturbed by any misbehaviour on the part of those who come to dig out the clay. Then they turn up rough sometimes.

Recently an owner whom I met upon the spot told me that he had made the women shift their digging place farther in, because they did not respect his garden and made his land look untidy. Sometimes the female relative of the owner of the land is reckoned the pit-owner, and if the carriers in any way offend her dignity she empties over the clay the water from her cooking-pot, in which she has cooked her fish and her vegetables, and no one can dig any more from that pit, as the clay is polluted. Who knows but that he might eat food, unwittingly, out of a pot the clay of which had been polluted? Tabus would be broken and the power of spells lost. Besides, in all probability any persons attempting to make pots from such clay would find that they would break in the making! The diggers themselves, therefore, are very careful never to drop fish-bones or coco-nut milk or the leaves covering the pots when cooking, or spill gravy, or let any refuse connected with cooking come near the clay-pit, lest all the pots should crack in making! All other things being equal, however, it is a common pit, and women from any or all sections of the village come to the same pit to dig.

You might pass the pit a dozen times a day and be quite unimpressed except for a casual wonder as to how that small hole got there. On my last visit I was a bit late in going, and the women met us on their way homewards, with their baskets of clay suspended from their foreheads. There was a small girl of about fourteen years of age still digging: her body completely filled up the opening to the pit and her head was inside the hole, for that was all the pit consisted of. She had a short flattened stick in her hand, and with it was breaking off bits of clay from the wall of the hole. When she had broken off sufficient clay she brought it out and put it into a rudely plaited coconut-leaf basket on the ground behind her. She then pulled together the sides of the basket by the long loop of stripped-bark cord, and suspending it from her forehead carried it on her back to the village. A lot of women had been there that morning, but there is

only room for one to dig at a time, and the youngest digger had to wait till last.

Waiting at the pit mouth affords a fine opportunity for any amount of gossip and scandal, and the women avail themselves of it. Why not? There is not much spice in their lives. Was it Olive Schreiner who wrote in the *Story of an African Farm* about someone watching the fowl pecking here and pecking there, a-toiling and a-toiling and an ending in nothing? But these Mailu women do not want it otherwise. Enough if they can live as their ancestors lived, work the same pits, use the same utensils, make the fire in the same way, and, in fact, just " keep the pot boiling."

As soon as the wall of the pit gets so far back as to make it uncomfortable to work, they start in a new place—preferably at the foot of a slight rise. They cut the long grass and dig a hole down through the roots and surface earth. Then, going a bit farther down into the clay, they start on the farther wall, so that in time the surface earth, held together by the grass roots, forms a roof over the pit. It reminds me always of a dog digging in the sand, and repeatedly sticking his nose in to scent the prey. I do not know anything about clay, but I always think this Mailu clay rather a poor article, as they use it. There is a lot of grit in it. It is porous except when the pot is actually on the fire cooking food. The grit is removed by the potter's fingers before commencing operations. By finger-pressure over the whole mass she removes all lumps of grit and stone or other foreign substance. In very dry weather she sometimes lets the whole basket of clay lie in the sea. Only salt water is used for moistening or working her clay. The mass ready, she breaks off what experience has taught her should be enough for one pot. She starts the actual making in the morning, and does no cooking for the family until the pot or pots are finished; especially does she refrain from cooking fish, and even from touching it, until the pot she is making is finished and ready for baking. Nor does she herself partake of food until then. Infringement of any of these customs would incur the penalty that the pot would break in the making!

The tools and appliances are simplicity itself: two rings of twisted dried banana leaves (*poni*), one smaller than the other, exactly like the circles I used to see bakers' men put

on their heads before carrying the big trays of loaves; half a coconut shell, as a mould to take the first coil or two, resting on the smaller *poni*; a big shell from the coral reef to hold salt water; two tiny pencils—slips of either coconut midrib or black palm with flattened chisel-like edge and a bit broken out of the edge so as to make a double line when scratching-in the pattern; a small shell for scraping. When these things and the basket of prepared clay are ready, the potter begins work. Herself sitting, and placing on the ground or the verandah the smaller *poni* with the coconut shell resting on it, she breaks off a small lump of the clay and rolls it between the palms of her hands into a fillet, about half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter. She coils this round the inside of the coconut shell, starting half-way up its side. With one hand she coils the following fillets round, while the other hand presses them one on top of the other and against the side of the shell till the rim of the shell is reached and the coil encircles the extreme edge; each coil is pressed upon itself or the previous coil. As the fillets of clay are thus gradually coiled up upon themselves, the vessel in no way resembles the shape of the finished article. For some distance up from the edge of the coconut shell the coils rise perpendicularly, or nearly so. As she approaches more nearly the required height she gradually increases the circumference of the coils, to form what will eventually be the lip of the pot.

Arriving at the required height, the potter takes the scraping shell and, with her left hand inside and exercising a slight pressure outwards, she scrapes away outside, obliterating all traces of the coils, and at the same time with the hand inside, immediately opposite the shell, gradually fashions the shape. The pot then begins to "belly," as she calls it. The scraping process is then done inside, with the other hand outside, until all trace of coils is lost both inside and outside, except from that part of the pot which is still inside the coconut shell.

She scrapes again outside, and with the pressure from within and the scraping without, a more decided convexity appears. As the hand inside follows the scraping she can detect any places where the clay is too thin and work in more.

To get the different parts into convenient position she

turns the whole thing round by the *poni*. The second scraping outside she calls the *sarosaro* scraping—*i.e.* the scraping that prepares for the pattern-writing. During that scraping she bends the broad rim over, and to strengthen the edge of the rim she works in, again by pressure and scraping, tiny fillets of clay, in case, as she says, the rim should crack when the pot is placed in the sun for drying.

She scrapes inside again and emphasizes the bellying just under the lip or rim of the pot. The surface of the broad lip is then carefully prepared by smoothing with the backs of her fingers moistened in salt water, and the edge of the lip

MAILU POTTERY

On the left is shown a variant of *Lepa*, taken from women's tattoo marks in the Central Division. To the right is *Oraora Au*, frog's hind leg and foot

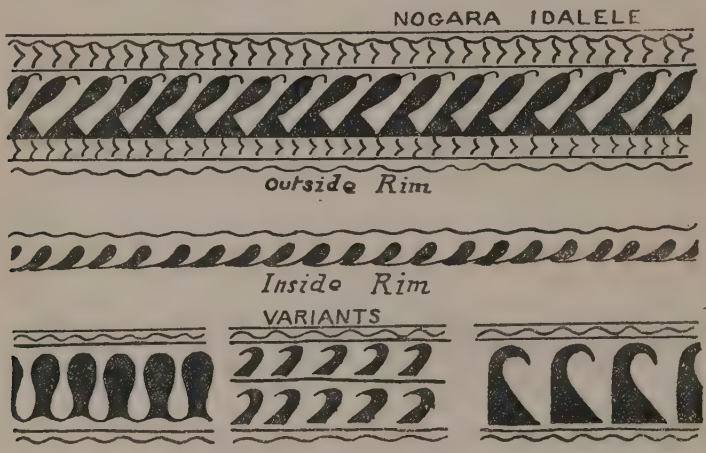
is smoothed round with the back of the shell similarly moistened.

She now starts scratching the pattern on to the outside of the lip. First she cuts the wavy line, top and bottom of the lip, and does top and bottom on one side before turning the pot round to continue the lines. Next she scratches the straight lines enclosing the pattern, just inside the wavy lines. She then puts in the key of the pattern and fills up the spaces between to complete the pattern.

The pot is now carried into the sun, still standing in the coconut shell resting on the *poni*. The bottom is still open. In quite a short time, just long enough to let the clay set, the maker brings it back again, takes it from the shell and the *poni*, and turns it upside down upon a spare grass skirt. With the thumb she smooths away the coil marks remaining

inside and outside on the part formerly in the shell. And the upstanding edges (the first coil) round the open bottom are "smacked in" with a small wooden bat, until the hole is enclosed, with more clay if necessary. The bottom is scraped again and the pot is turned right way up and placed on the bigger *poni*.

The inside of the bottom is scraped again and the vessel put in the sun. In the evening, after the meal of the day, a long line of fires can be seen all along the foreshore—the women baking their pots in the breeze. Before putting the



This pattern, used for the decoration of pots, represents the clouds standing on the horizon, blown by the wind

pot on the fire, the bottom, inside and out, is scraped again, "lest the pot should crack in the baking."

A few hot embers are placed in the bottom of the pot and held to the breeze for a few moments; then the pot is turned upside down over a little glowing fire, and the woman starts to build a fire round the pot, and resting against its sides. *Only* dry coconut midribs and dry spathes that contained the bud shoot are used for this fire, otherwise the pot would crack in the baking! The midribs are broken into lengths of about thirty inches. The wide butt-ends stand on the ground and the narrower parts rest against the pot.

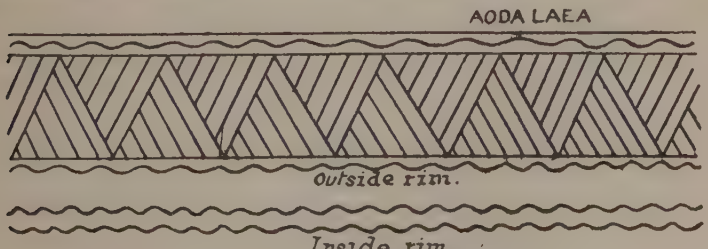
The building up of the fire is such as to give the idea that it is subconsciously done to form a strong upward draught. It is lit from inside, by pushing in dry coconut

leaflets against the glowing embers on which the pot rests. In the breeze the fire shoots up as through a funnel, and as soon as this funnel is burnt out the pot is removed from the fire and allowed to cool. It is then a healthy brick-red in colour. An industrious woman can make three, or even four, pots in the day.

One woman said to me a short time ago: "If a village on the mainland tells us that they want pots, we stick at it, and our husbands, all hungry, call out to us that they have caught fish for no purpose, for it is still uncooked—'Are you ever going to finish those pots?'" I would not like to say that the women never reply to this, appropriately or otherwise, nor would I like to quote some of the retorts. Poor hungry men!

The men take the pots to the mainland in canoes and buy food with them. The mainland people also store them, and on an appointed day the Dimuga inland people come down from the mountains, their women carrying great burdens of netted bags full of tubers, and hold a market or exchange (*nai*). As they return to their fastnesses they may transfer the burdens of pots to the men, who carry them suspended by vines to long poles on their shoulders, or the women may carry them within bags.

On protracted journeys the Mailu people take some of their womenfolk, together with supplies of pots and clay. New pots are made on the canoes and are baked as they come to their moorings at night. In this way, so long as the clay holds out, they can procure a food supply practically anywhere they go. I have never heard of their making pots from clay of other districts as they journey about.



PATTERN ON NATIVE POTTERY

The idea of this design is taken from the lines of canvas of a foreign sail

CHAPTER XVI

Armshells & Armshell-Making

The Fishing Grounds—Chipping—Sawing Off—Grinding—Polishing, Drilling & Decorating—Pairing—The Trip to Aroma—Armshell Magic—Barter for Pigs

CHIP! Chip! Chip! All day and every day. I walked through the village street and it reminded me, for all the world, of a busy stone-mason's yard, for there is quite the metallic ring of chisel upon stone. Most of the canoes are just back from a long trip to eastward for shells. They left in February, it is now May. Some of them have been lucky and hit upon good patches. Generally speaking, the weather has been against them this year. They have had continuous rains, and exceptionally big seas have been breaking on the island reefs. The canoe that went farthest from home got to Rossel Island, 350 miles east-south-east in direct line from Mailu. They scoured the best reefs in the Engineer and Conflict Groups and the Louisiade Archipelago. They visited numerous islands, among them Rossel Island, Sudest, Joannet, Misima (St Agnan), Panniet, Moresby Island and Sariba; and practically every mainland village on the coast between here and East Cape. In former days they could not go so far afield. Then they got most of their shell from the barrier reef off Aroma, which they still visit annually for the same purpose. For some years the increasing number of Mailu searchers, under the more secure conditions, has exhausted the shell there, and they have to go much greater distances. But upon returning from this last eastern trip they told me that in the east also big shell is difficult to find, as white men have paid boys out on the reefs searching for the shell, and that these same men employ at times quite a number of natives to make up the armshells for sale and native trade. In the old days the Mailu men never went eastwards along the south coast beyond Suau (seventy miles). But they went to the head of Mullens Harbour, moored their canoes near the mouth of the Sagarai river, walked up through Sagarai

valley, over the Buhutu people's hills down to the head of Milne Bay, to the village of Maivara. From this village, with which they seem always to have been on friendly terms, they often got pigs, and also augmented the number of their own manufactured armshells by buying with small pigs those made by the Massim people. The best of these armshells came by trading, through the Southern Massim, from the Northern Massim (Trobriand Islanders).

The armshells made by the Southern Massim are purchased by the Mailu people, but they have to be re-ground, re-polished, and made up by the Mailu Islanders, before they are fit for the " western " trade. The Trobriand Island armshells, like the Mailu, are in the western natives' eyes very valuable. The keen desire of the Aroma, or, as Mailu calls them, the Uri people, to secure these things by exchange for their big pigs (for which they demand increasingly high prices), keeps Mailu pretty busy in the armshell business. Without trespassing too far on our " trading " chapter, I may as well say at once that, wherever he goes, both east and west, the Mailu man establishes agencies. In the proper place I shall tell about these agencies—how they are made, and how binding upon the parties, their children, and children's children. Goods from western Papua are left by the Mailu with their agents in the east for the purchase and collecting of eastern armshells or other goods desired by the " west," and vice versa. The agencies are entirely individual and personal. Wherever there is anything to be got, agencies are established; and if in the west the man from Mailu gets the worst, he certainly gets the better of the bargain in the east. Needless to say that numbers of new agencies were made upon this last extensive trip east.

I have given the pottery industry the prior position, because it provides the daily bread and the maintenance of the community. The armshell industry is a very close second, for it is closely associated with marriage and its obligations at the big ceremonial festivals, and therefore with the maintenance of the community as a social organization. They speak of their armshells as their wealth (*babadau*), but never speak of their pottery in that way. They look upon that as their food.

The shell used is a species of Conus—*Conus Millepunctatus*,

I think. The usable shells vary in height from six to eight inches, and their bases are anything from two and a half to six inches in diameter. When they have found one they tap out with a hard stone the centre of the base, within the second circle from the outside, while the fish is still alive. The fish is taken out through this hole, roasted and eaten. The Mailu people, unlike some armshell-making people in the east, do not boil the shell with the fish in it; they say that this method softens the shell too much.

The central spiral within the shell is broken off about half-way down. During the evenings, on their canoes at the shelling grounds, they continue the tapping to enlarge the circumference of the hole; and while travelling homewards it is a case of tap, tap, tap, all the time. This still goes on after getting home, for the old men, and those who did not go shell-collecting, all lend a hand.

When they have made the hole in the base as large as they can without damaging the inner surface too much or destroying the link of the spiral with the base, they scratch a thin line all round the shell, about one and a half to two inches from the base. The line is a guide for the cutting or sawing through. I am always surprised to see how, with apparently no measuring instrument, they can scratch the line so true that end exactly meets end. Originally, they used to scratch this first line, and also go on to cut the section right through, with a bit of an old cooking-pot, sharpened to an edge on a stone! They did it near the water-side, and put sand and salt water on the line where the scratching had to be done. Nowadays they use the serrated edge of a sharp shell, while the younger bucks, who have come in contact with modern appliances, use files or saws that they have begged, picked up or stolen. When they have cut through the greater part of the thickness of the shell they break off the remainder by gently tapping with a hard stone.

Next comes the thinning down and smoothing off, inside and outside, of the complete circular section. A stone, very strikingly resembling our old scythe stones at home, is shaped and kept for this purpose. When excavating here for the erection of our house we came across such a stone,

with bits of pottery and part of the skull of the old owner—some of his old tools had been buried with him. Near to pieces of the skull we also found a tiny adze, beautifully made from the rejected part of one of these same shells.

The workman thrusts the long grindstone through the shell and rests each end on a big stone. Then, holding the shell with both hands and occasionally wetting it with salt water, he works it backwards and forwards on the grindstone. This is continued until the inner surface is as smooth and flat as possible. Then he smooths the outside surface and edges by rubbing on a bigger and flatter stone, until all markings and outer growths are removed and a perfect polish is produced.

If the long round grindstone is only of small calibre, and likely to break with the downward pressure of the worker, he makes a wooden bed for it, exactly as we do for a whetstone, in which case he puts bed and stone complete through the shell circle. One armshell only is made from each shell, so that there may be a complete circle inside formed by the joining of the spiral to the side near the base.

When the armlet is smooth and quite white, three small holes are drilled near the end of the remaining portion of the lip; the decorations of the shell are fastened to these. There are two different kinds of drill used, both of native design. The simpler one consists of a short round stick of black palm, with a slit at the larger end, into which a bit of sharp flinty stone is fixed and then bound round. This drill is worked by being rotated sharply backwards and forwards between the palms of the hands. In the second and more elaborate form the spindle and stone bit do not differ from the first, except that the spindle is longer, but a more mechanical device is made for imparting reciprocal rotation. A shorter stick is suspended horizontally from the top of the spindle by two pieces of string fastened to its ends and to the top of the spindle. By rotating the spindle, both strings are wound round it, thus drawing up the horizontal piece; rotation is then produced by downward pressure on this horizontal piece alternating with release, so as to wind and unwind the string upon the spindle, and rotate the point first one way and then the other. To give more stability

and strength to the rotating spindle another horizontal stick is tied firmly across it near the bit end and produces much the same effect as a fly-wheel.

The decorations of the shell consist first of all of a few black seeds or berries (*gudaguda*) of the wild banana, which bears an inedible fruit. They are threaded as beads immediately against the small holes. The Mailu people take these as part barter for eastern-made armshells. Threaded Papuan beads, consisting of thin small discs of shell lip, nowadays called New Guinea " money," are fastened to the *gudaguda*, and there are generally three or four strings of these beads to each armshell. A white cowrie shell is often fastened to the armshell by strings of beads. The most valuable of these disc beads are made by the Motumotu people, and come through by barter to Aroma, where the Mailu get them in their turn. From the ends of the bead strings they tie bits of pearl shell and streamers of dried bleached palm leaves. Though an armshell never finds its way into the world without some New Guinea *bore* about it, the white man's red glass beads are now largely used for the strings, and are so much the vogue in armshell decoration that even the conservative Mailuan looks upon them as his, and during the war, when they could not be got, quite thought he was being done out of what was legitimately his.

The finished armshells of their own making are carefully stored up with those they have added by exchange, and each man, as he completes his stock, lays them out on his front verandah, for all and sundry to gaze upon with longing eyes. They are then put aside against the big day when they will be taken to Aroma to buy pigs. The large and high-priced armshells are all named. They are generally named after the particular reef or part of reef where the shell was found; no matter how many are taken from that spot, they will all bear that name. Upon the purchase of such a shell ready made, the purchaser asks its name, and the name is perpetuated as far as it travels along the Papuan coast, which is many miles. The valuable armshells are those that will go up over a man's elbow. These are spoken of as " man armshells " (*egi oba*). Next to these come the " female armshells " (*avesa oba*). They will go up over a woman's elbow but not a man's. A " bundle " (*toba*) of armshells consists of four

male and four female shells. These eight, in Mailu parlance, constitute the " centre " (*gubare*), and ten little ones must be placed on either side of these eight central ones. All these are tied together in pairs and each pair is called a " string " (*maina*). A *maina* generally consists of a male and female armshell (*oba*). When tied to a man's *oba* the woman's *oba* drops its own name and takes the name of the other—*i.e.* both now bear the same name. Slightly smaller ones in the " line " are called younger brother or younger sister, *obas*, but are unnamed. I said " line," because we are dealing now with the Mailu man's " money table." He always describes the number he has to give for a pig by showing you the length the line would cover on the ground if his armshells were laid side by side, and there must be a special arrangement in that line too. The four male *obas* take the central position, and next, at either end of them, two female *obas*, and next to them on either end ten smaller *obas*, decreasing in size towards the ends of the line.

I have known an exceptionally fine pair of these shells to fetch eighteen pounds at Port Moresby, and to-day for male armshells a Port Moresby man, I am told, will give eight, ten or twelve pounds for a pair. The Aroma sharks do not do too badly out of Mailu. No wonder our people come back from Aroma imitating the Aroma man's " Come back again, won't you? " Mailu men will " do " most people, but they cannot " do " an Aroma man. The latter knows perfectly well that, on account of food scarcity, Mailu cannot rear its own pigs; that Mailu has no local market for the armshells, the demand being in the west; and that tyrant custom will allow no departure from its dictates: Aroma also knows only too well that Mailu social organization demands the purchase of these pigs. What is it all for? Let us wait and see.

During a year in which there may be no big ceremonial festival at a man's wife's particular village or clan, he will probably devote his wealth to the purchase of a pig, which he may barter for a big " dug-out "; or he may lend his wealth to one who has failed to get sufficient shells himself; or he may store them up, if he can, for importunate beggars are always round him.

But suppose there *is* going to be a big festival on

Mailu Island; all the canoes will go west in the spring, the wealth will be carried off, and a spell pronounced on leaving.

The canoes will assemble at Coutance Island, on the barrier reef opposite Maopa village, the metropolis of Aroma. When the last canoe has arrived, the men come from their several canoes to another, on which the magician or one of the magicians is travelling; they bring their armshells to him. Should there be no room on the canoe, they repair to the beach at the water's edge. The armshells are put in lines along the beach. The owners sit round and the magician at the head of the lines of shells. He wears the ceremonial perineal band, strands of sun-bleached leaves as streamers from his wrists, knees and ankles, and cassowary feathers in his waistband and armlets; a big gourd containing lime is hung from one shoulder in ceremonial fashion; from the other shoulder hangs the ceremonial netted bag, containing the lime spatula, the handle of which is decorated with small white cowrie shells (also set on the gourd), some areca-nut, betel-vine leaves, stalk and fruit (*arava*); half a bivalve shell with sharp edge, with which he cuts his areca-nut; a piece of cinnamon bark (*gobu*); little bunches of dried leaves tied together—his scent; a small bamboo phial holding dried leaves, and his big charm. Every now and again he takes out a pinch of the leaves and, biting them, puts them back again. On these trips to Aroma, since they are connected with a spirit feast of ancestral importance, most of the men are blackened, and for the same reason the magician is now blackened all over to perform this special ceremony of the anointing and washing of the armshells. First, in the presence of all, he bites off a bit of areca-nut, chews it with betel-vine leaves, stem and fruit, and with it takes the usual condiment of lime; he also bites off some cinnamon bark and chews the lot together until the tip of his tongue and the copious saliva in his mouth are bright red. With this "quid" in his mouth he addresses a husked coconut, which he holds close to his face, moving his head from side to side, for all the world as if he was earnestly and secretly addressing some person. The termination of the verb here, ". . . *isausa*," means "I . . . you," where "you" is the personal object. This is what he says:

"*A . . . goru tabubuisausamu.*
A . . . goru ena isausamu.
A . . . goru moneaisausamu.
A . . . ovotabubuisausamu.
A . . . ovogoragoraisausamu.
A . . . ovoegenaisausamu."

The first three lines refer to the breaking (*goru*) of the nut. The last three refer to the washing (*ovo*) of the shells. The meaning is as follows:—

"Ah (I) break, sacred, you (sacred does not refer to the 'you' but to the breaking).
Ah (I) break, desire (to create desire) you (*ena* means to cast longing eyes on, eventually adultery).
Ah (I) break, fatness, you (literally means I break you that their beauty (armshells) may be desired).
Ah (I) wash, sacred, you.
Ah (I) wash, trembling you (literally implying that the armshells may be taken feverishly, in haste, no haggling about it).
Ah (I) wash, truly, you."

Having uttered this spell (*uura*), he spits out (*kusiva*) the red saliva upon the nut with a *fuaaa* sound. Then he takes a stone and breaks open the coconut into two halves, letting some of the coconut water flow into another shell. He then scrapes out the kernel, and moistening it with the coconut water washes the armshells and dips each one into the sea; while he is doing this washing and dipping he chants, and all the men repeat each stanza in unison:

"*Owai auraiai milomilo ni bada nee.*"
"Ancestors' side dirty" (meaning lost).

"*O tabubuai auraiai milomilo ni bada nee.*"
"Oh sacred side dirty" (meaning lost).

"*Milomilo ni bada ne owai auraiai.*"
"Dirty ancestors' side."

"*Milomilo ni bada ne O tabubuai.*"
"Dirty sacred."

I should suggest that the singers of this chant do not here refer directly to the armshells, but to their own approach in supplication to their "ancestors' side." I think that *milomilo* (dirty) refers to their own bodies! A large number of them are ceremonially dirty. While their bodies are blackened (*guruma*) they habitually speak of themselves as "dirty." And considering the ceremony that they have just performed, their most sacred religious rite and appeal to ancestors, I think that this chant is the last sacred appeal to them before exchanging their armshells for pigs. It is an appeal for help, that they may be successful, and is chanted in a deeply solemn fashion.

After being washed and dipped, the shells are put in the sun to dry, then each man takes his own *tobas* back to his canoe, and all is ready for proceeding to the Aroma villages. In each case the agents are approached first by their Mailu partners. There is a good deal of haggling, and in addition to the line of shells the Aroma pig owners demand anything else the Mailu people may have. The success of the journey does not depend only on the number and size of pigs, but upon the expeditiousness of the exchange.

CHAPTER XVII

Trade, Trade Articles & Trade Routes

THE Mailu people—and more particularly, as the sea-going fraternity, the Mailu Island community—have always been one of those important links which by trade have joined up widely differing tribes along the south-east coast.

They have introduced the culture of one people into that of another. The remarkable thing to me is that, except to a certain extent among the distributors themselves, the traded articles of culture seem to pass through the tribes without making any very perceptible difference.

Pottery, so closely associated with food, was always sought after, and hence the potters became very largely the traders.

The people with whom Mailu traded in the old days were the Aroma in the west, particularly the metropolis Maopa, and the Daui section of the Southern Massim in the east, and again, particularly, the villages round and inland from the shores of Mullens Harbour. In those days Mailu never went east of Suau (Stacey Island), and very rarely west of Maopa. They speak of Suau and Savaia, and one or two Daui villages, as having been cannibal, and on that account used rather to dread such places.

From the Aroma people Mailu get short strings of rounded shell discs. They buy them with forehead ornaments (*kema*) which they make up from pieces of shell used by the eastern people as weights for their nets. These discs (*ope bore*) are used as ornaments for the rim and lobe of the ear, and are strung into long lengths and sold in the east. Netted string bags (*oisa*) are popular trade articles from Aroma. They are of various sizes, made by inland villages behind Aroma, to which coast they are brought in return for fish and shell ornaments. Mailu buy the *oisas* with sago. I reckon that the man who gets the *oisa* gets the better of the bargain; but then the other gets food.

Dogs, small pigs and feathers are all likewise purchased, principally with sago. The dogs and small pigs are taken east, where dog-flesh is appreciated, and pigs bred and exchanged, to comply with feast and marriage customs.

Mailu Islanders, not having birds that can supply them with feathers for head-dresses, need these things, and barter for them at Aroma.

Barbed spears, woven armlets, wooden bowls and coconut water-bottles are spoken of, not as things to be bartered, but as things that are given to Mailu by Aroma friends and agents in return for gifts of sago. No intermarriage relationships have been established either east or west. The term *emegi goina* (friends or relations), applied to certain individuals east and west, refers to the establishment of agencies far back, between, say, a Mailu household and an Aroma household. I have already told how these bonds were, and are, made. From generation to generation the bond is perpetuated.

These particular houses are the first to be visited for trade, and incidentally, because there is a chance of getting food there, the prices are lower between such agents, but for others are considerably higher.

The *maila*, or perineal band for initiates, was also purchased at Aroma, as dress for special occasions, and is purchased there to-day. Port Moresby (Hanuabada) strings of threaded shell discs (*bore*), small in size, but of great value, are purchased from Aroma for the market in the east.

But of course *the* trade with Aroma was, and is, for big pigs. Some of these certainly are of enormous size. They are bought with armshells, stone axes and adzes (*ua*), obsidian, dogs' teeth made up into necklaces, strings of black seed of the wild banana, sago, woven reed mats for houses, cooking-pots, black-lip shell ground down for food-preparing knives, and the same with serrated edge as coconut scrapers, fashioned on Mailu. Nowadays, besides such native wealth, foreign axes, knives, and even money are demanded in addition!

Until recently, by far the most important trade articles secured from the east were the beautiful smooth stone axes and adzes (*ua*); and the adzes ready mounted in carved

and ornamental handles (*adivi*) are used on ceremonial occasions and in dances. Even to-day some come into the market.

These articles were bartered for by Mailu chiefly with the people of the numerous villages round the shores of Mullens Harbour, and with people at the back of these, particularly the Boroai people, behind the eastern shores of that almost inland lake.

Beyond Boroai again are the two villages of Lumaobu and Lumawoipu, and in again from them are the Igora villages on about the last vertebræ of the great mountain backbone of New Guinea.

The best authorities on Mailu speak of Igora as the place where the stone axes and adzes were and are made for trade purposes. Our people tell us that those villages possess a stone of better grinding power than is possessed elsewhere, or, as they tell me, "like the stone your foreign grindstones are made of." The axes and adzes are made from a very hard dark stone, sometimes dark green. I do not suggest that here only were such stones made, but merely that it is the only place known to the Mailuans. Among other inland places in the Mullens Harbour vicinity, mentioned by Mailu folk as places with which they trade, are, Dobuopu, Daudau, Bubuoo, Sagarae, Aruasi, Batubatu, Bonari, Sausiri, Samarou, Goviara and Garamu. Mailu also sought for these articles and other trade produce at coast villages as far east as Suau (Stacey Island), such being Dahuni, Veriveri, Bonabona, and the villages in Farm Bay, Savaia and Navabu.

At the places about Mullens Harbour the Mailu traders did very well. They there dealt with a people far more tractable and much less grasping. And if Aroma "have" the Mailu people to-day, Mailu certainly "had" the folk round Mullens Harbour in the early days. For example, at an inside village in the old days the regular price for a stone axe or adze head was one Mailu cooking-pot, but in addition to the axe head, two bunches of taro, a bunch of bananas and a basketful of another tuber were thrown in. For an *adivi*—that is, an adze mounted on ceremonial handle—Mailu gave a young pig or a dog or string of shell discs.

Of almost equal importance then, and of more importance now, were *obas* of Massim make, to augment the supply made on Mailu itself. The Massim armshells were brought to Mailu, then as now, and many were ground down thinner to meet the taste of the western market. The Massim ornaments were fastened on to them again. This trade is greater to-day than ever before. Peace conditions give a much wider field for search, long trips from home can be made with more safety to those who remain behind, and in consequence the number of those who go is larger.

I have already mentioned the times of the year in which the trips are made, east and west. The most important easterly trip is that taken just as the westerly winds are breaking off, and nowadays those who make it are absent from home two or three months.

The purpose of the trip is to search for the cone shells from which the armshells are made. In old days these unprepared shells were sought for only on the reefs between Table Point and Aroma. And since those going could not be so many, nor absences from home so long, there generally were enough shells to meet the demand, while the price for a pig was not so high as now. Nowadays every able-bodied man is able to leave home and the number of armshells demanded for a pig is much greater. So the reefs have been recently much worked out, and the Mailuans have to go farther afield. For example, last year twelve canoes went away in late February and returned in early May, and some of them went three hundred miles to windward, where they searched the main reefs of the following groups of islands: Engineer Group, The Conflicts, D'Entrecastaux Islands and the Louisiade Archipelago, including Misima, The Calvados Chain, Sudest and Rossel Island; to say nothing of the reefs round the almost innumerable islets and the isolated reef patches. Some of the canoes, after rounding the great Fergusson Island, came through the Moresby Strait, and then headed due south to the north-east mainland; working their way south-east again they rounded East Cape and got a fair wind to bring them back to anxiously waiting friends, who had somehow heard all sorts of nerve-racking rumours. The reader, I fear, must wonder why all this ado about "nothing." But from

the native standpoint it is a very decided "something," and we are not concerned here with the standpoint of foreigners. The perpetuation of ancestral custom to meet the social economic demands of the community is the *raison d'être* of the whole thing.

In such matters the women are the conservative element. They are vitally concerned, for a great part of the effect of these trips is to satisfy marriage customs. Unknown to them, healthy life demands the expenditure of energy to maintain the standard. Much that the savage does is, unconsciously to him, the doing of a dictation lesson, and nature, in its fullest sense, is the dictator. Much that he does, so little understood by us, is the outlet for energy that the struggle for existence demands.

The hero of ancient legend who set this trading and travelling ball a-rolling, and who first introduced domestic pigs, coconuts and sago, was one called Tau, sometimes called Samudulele. The former is the name more generally used in legend, and is the more interesting too, because, as far as I know anything of other Papuo-Melanesians along the coast, the name Tau is part of the title of their tribal hero. Tauhou and Taufou are found among the Southern Massim, while Taurama (the name of a big promontory on the coast just east of Port Moresby) was the Motuan legendary hero who started the *hiri*, the big annual trip to the west of the Motuans, with thousands of cooking-pots, armshells and other native wealth, in return for which they got sago and canoes from the people in the Gulf. Chalmers, in one of his books, tells the legend which he learned when on one of their *hiris* he himself travelled west with them. This Motuan legend also accounts for the one apparently isolated hill, Aird Hill (*Neure*), standing up in the swamps of the Delta. Taurama cut off Neure from him after a quarrel and placed him west, but friendly relations were eventually established and trade started between the Motuans and the west.

The Mailu hero, Tau, came from the west to the east. I will give a literal translation of the legend as given to me.

"His village was Ubuau or Oilavanua. He and his mother came by small canoe. They two left their village and poled their way along near the shore to Domara, arrived, and

slept there. When morning came poled again to Abau. Lived at Abau, they two lived there. While there, Tau ground down his nose-stick (*kove*), and his buttock marks where he sat and his finger marks are on the stone there. In the evening of one day went to his mother for food, said to his mother, 'Mother! we two will go to another village.' In the morning they two poled along to Batumata (Table Point), slept a bit there and, when still dark, poled along to Ade (mouth of river at head of Amazon Bay), slept there. Next night they poled to Dorio (the big rock in the mouth of Oibada river, Orangerie Bay). At Dorio, Tau grew a boil on his hind quarters; they two slept there two days, then poled along to Gadaisu; reached there at dawn, begged for fire from a man, saying, 'Give me a bit of fire.'

"The Gadaisu man said, 'Go and get it yourself,' so he himself went into the village and got fire; he said to those who would not get it for him, 'You make no Mauru' (big feast). 'You go only to the dances at other villages, continue to eat only bush pig; in the mornings, go for your bush pig! You continue to get fish only with your fish spear!' Tau and his mother, they two, poled away to Manubada. At Manubada, he said to a man, 'Get me a bit of fire.' The man replied, 'Go and get it yourself.' Tau said, 'Continue to fatten pigs for other villages to eat, go on dance days only.' At Maraia, they two roasted food. One pig ran off into the bush (he was carrying pigs on the canoe). One pig was tied on the canoe, others were in a piece of bamboo. The big sow tied up on the canoe bore a lot of little ones, they were put in the bamboo and shut up there. Tau ran off to get back the other pig, desisted, and came back to the canoe. In the morning they two paddled to a village called Veriveri. The Veriveri men were 'kill-men-feast-making.' These men were lying under a house, tied up. Tau said, 'What is this? These are not pigs; untie their hands, there are pigs in the bamboo; turn them out on the beach, eating-pigs these, eat pigs and make feasts, let these men go!' They two went to a village called Ieru, and stayed at Ieru, planted sago and coconuts until his mother died. His mother dead, he went down to Diliulele, wrapped his mother in a mat, took her by canoe to Diliulele's village. Diliulele asked, 'Who are you?'

'I am Samudulele, my name is Tau. My mother is dead, so I have come to you; what is your name?' 'My name is Diliulele.' 'Where shall I bury my mother?' 'Dig, and bury her there; this will be, we two, our village. Your mother is dead, continue always to stop here. Here are your coconuts, here your food, we will stop together.' Tau touched Diliulele and said, 'Trusting you I came, I will stay.'"

When I said there did not appear to be much there to show how Tau introduced pigs and coconuts and sago along this coast, Papari compassionately smiled on me, and kindly taking into consideration that I was a foreigner, and therefore did not know what to read into a New Guinea story, explained to me that Tau dropped pigs and nuts, and planted sago, at all places along the coast, except at those where they would not give him fire. Papari says that the sago Tau planted is short, and the coconuts bear before the trees are high. There were no domesticated pigs before Tau's time, except at Aroma, whence he came. And that explains, says Papari, why Mailu people have always gone to Aroma to buy their pigs.

CHAPTER XVIII

Property

Property & Inheritance—Land Tenure—Gardens—Garden-making

I WAS speaking the other day to some native friends about the wealth, as I thought it, possessed by the women. On ceremonial occasions this display represents a good deal and it called forth my query. The old men could only laugh and say: "Women's wealth!" They went on to explain to me that a woman's wealth consists of her skirts, cooking-pot, coconut water-bottles, rude basket and hand-scoop net, with a shell or two for preparing food. The finery is always lent by the men friends!

She inherits nothing, except her drudgery, and asks for nothing more or better; much less does she ask for any responsibility beyond that associated with suckling her child, cooking her pot and feeding the pig.

If she leaves her husband she has no claim on her children. She is allowed to take the child at her breast, but as soon as it is old enough it is taken back to the man's people.

Upon the death of her husband, if she has had children by him, the widow continues to live with her late husband's people as one of the family, makes gardens on their land, uses their property, and brings up her children there. If her husband dies childless she returns at once to her own people and clan, who are responsible to her late husband's people for any debts still standing, unless she should marry again before the debts are paid, in which case, before her people receive anything from the new husband, he has to pay off the old debts.

A married woman is at liberty, if all parties are willing, to make her garden with her husband on *her* relatives' land. But, as she can inherit no land, she brings none to her husband.

Property is all inherited through the male line. A man inherits the right to plant and work on the land of his clan. If the eldest son is grown up and married at the time of his

Skirt Making from Coconut Leaves.

Bringing in Firewood and Garden Produce, Mailu Island.

father's death, he inherits the father's property, including the house. If a man's male children are still young at his death, the brother (children's younger "father") holds the property until such time as the children are old enough to take charge. The property of a man who dies childless goes to his brother. A younger son is never supposed to marry till his elder brother is married.

Spells (*uura*) are handed down, like property.

Native property is spoken of as permanent (*ona*) or transitory (*babadau*). Permanent property consists of the house and its flooring-boards, coconut and areca-nut palms, ceremonial fishing-net (*gauma*), dance feathers and head-dress (heirlooms), ordinary fishing-nets, canoes and pigs.

On the owner's death, if there is no issue, the house is pulled down, or on the mainland burned down. As a sign of intense grief, this is sometimes done even when there is issue. If, however, several families live in the house, it will be preserved.

Transitory property (*babadau*) consists of armshells, strings of New Guinea beads, armlets, plaited fibre waistbands, neck and ear ornaments not associated with the dance. Even the beautiful stone axes are reckoned as transitory, because they are used for barter; on the mainland they formerly came under the heading of real property, because they were in continual use in cutting down the forest to make gardens, and not for barter.

Before leaving the subject of inheritance I want incidentally to mention the Mailu man's established belief in heredity. Speaking to the older men about the propensity of certain young people to steal, and of others to be unfaithful to their wives, they have frequently used words to the effect: "Well, what can you expect? their parents were always the same and noted for it. It runs in families, and they are known throughout the village."

Land Tenure.—Land is owned by the village community. Practically no land is unowned. Ownership shows itself in water, road, clay, hunting, planting and gardening rights.

Natural geographical features form the boundaries, rivers in particular.

Within the community, land is divided up into clan ownership; this is very strictly observed by communities

whose land is small, such as that of the community of Mailu Island. For one clan to trespass on the land of another in the old days meant death to the trespassers. Water and clay rights, however, are common to the whole community.

The clan land is again divided up for ownership among the several sub- or family-clans (*lugu*); this ownership is especially marked on Mailu Island, where the areas are so small. A man speaks of land as inherited from his father. Family ownership is also recognized on the mainland, but there it relates to the planting of such permanent things as coconut and betel-nut palms; and I think in this way only has land on the mainland come to be spoken of as privately owned and inherited—that is, certain spots in the huge areas, where individuals have decided to plant these permanent trees, have come to be looked upon as privately owned.

On the mainland the making of a garden by the members of a clan or sub-clan in no way entails proprietorship of that area, and in three or four years' time that patch becomes secondary scrub and reverts to the community at large. But my experience goes to show that, if a certain individual of that clan should find in that garden patch, especially if no great distance from the village, a suitable bit of soil for planting permanent palms, and should announce that he has chosen it for that purpose, nothing more is said, and eventually that particular bit of land is looked upon as his —though such planting may make that bit of land useless to the community because of the shade cast by his trees. Land is plentiful.

I think all land in this district, whether on the mainland or on Mailu Island, originally only became privately owned by the planting of permanent economic trees and the burial of relatives under them.

It is quite common to plant a coconut-palm at the head of the grave, and very often two so close together that they grow up as twin trees.

The sub-clan land on Mailu Island may be the property of one, two, or even four houses, representing that greater family (*lugu*), and according as the individuals plant up that land with permanent economic plants, so it comes more or less under individual proprietorship.

On the island also not only is land inherited, but it is given away. For example, a Maradubu boy marries a Morau girl; a male child is born to them. The girl's father points out to her husband a certain piece of land; it may have permanent trees on it or not. He tells him to plant this for the new grandchild, whose property it is to be. The son-in-law plants it but can claim no ownership. That land is recognized as the gift land of the grandfather to his grandchild. The father of the child owns only what land was left him by his father, unless it happened with him as with his own child in our example.

On the island clan land is clearly defined by the hills, but that owned by the different greater families within the clans is not so well defined. If the greater family does not contain many men, they unite in making a common garden, which means the heavy work of digging up the tall rank grass. Where the greater family consists of three or four houses, each household may make its own garden. To distinguish in the garden between one household's portion and that of another, stones are used. No fences are required as there is no wild game. In the old days, when there were many more risks attached to travelling about, there was much more garden activity on Mailu Island, but I think that the land on the island has never been able to support the population. Many natives speak glibly about the food their old giant-strong forbears planted, but what village will not speak in like way of forbears? These same people also tell you that their ancestors always purchased food with pots from Woworo and Delebai people, with whom they were on friendly terms, so that their island supplies of food cannot have been sufficient.

Although there are no clan proprietary rights to the reef round Mailu Island, individuals are generally found working that part of the reef opposite their own clan land. An individual sometimes takes it upon himself to put up a *gora*, or sign, on the reef to indicate that that particular spot is tabu to others until he has made a *saea*—that is, has united with the other members of the greater family in laying down a long semicircle of nets joined together for catching fish on a certain day.

But we are getting away from the land. On the mainland

a clan, and sometimes two clans, unite to make a garden. Cutting down the big timber involves much labour.

A place in the forest is chosen, the under scrub cut down first, and then the bigger timber; the wood is left to dry, and is then burnt off and cleaned up. Some food is planted at once, by making a small hole with a stick to put in the taro top or banana sucker.

As for the most part the villages are small, the community as a whole often unites in making a garden; where the villages are bigger the families in a clan unite.

Before the big pig-fence is erected the land within the prescribed area is divided up according to the number of households by laying down saplings. A central path runs right through the area, with saplings laid along either side. As these gardens are often made on the steep slopes of the hills, the divisional saplings serve the purpose also of preventing the loose earth from being swept down by the rains. It is a common sight to see gardens right on the tops of the high hills, to get the moisture from the night mists. All these gardens have to be strongly protected against the bush pig. Building the fence means a great deal of labour. Suitable saplings are cut from the bush just outside the garden area, around which logs are laid down end to end. The saplings are cut into stakes, and these are thrust into the ground at intervals opposite one another along either side of the logs. Other logs, left from the incomplete burning off, are laid longitudinally along the top of the first line within the two lines of the upright stakes, which are drawn as near together as they will come by bush vines tied at intervals as the fence rises in height. The fences are about five or six feet high, to prevent wallabies and wild pigs from jumping over. The fence is not built until a portion of the area is planted, and it is quite a common practice to build a small hut in the centre of the area, and for a man and his wife to spend their nights there until the fence has been completed. Coming back from visits inland, and travelling at night to avoid the great heat of the day, I and my party have been suddenly startled by alarming weird yells in the stillness; one soon learns that it is not someone being murdered, but only a man, or sometimes his wife, waking up to frighten away any bush pigs

that may be prowling around. There is strict sexual tabu on the garden area itself, or in the bush near, during the making of a new garden, lest the garden be destroyed by pigs, or the fence broken down!

For digging up the long sword-grass, with its needle-like piercing roots which break off in sections and start to grow in a marvellously short time, the tools employed on Mailu Island are two long, flattened, black palm sticks, two and a half inches wide and pointed at one end. After having burned off a patch of the grass, the diggers stand in line, each man with his two sticks (*dora*), which he thrusts into the ground, and when both are well down, and those of the other diggers too, they pull back together and turn over the sod. The women, also in line, follow the men and break up the sods with short sharpened sticks, and take out as many of the broken roots as they can find. At the foot of the hills and in the gullies the soil on Mailu consists of hard black clay. The hills themselves have only a very thin covering of loose stony soil. What flats there are nearer the foreshore consist of little more than sand.

Where gardening is a more serious business, as on the mainland, the principal garden-making times are *lioro ogoda* (late spring or early summer), and *auari* (late autumn or early winter), in each case with a view to getting the following rains. A garden may or may not be definitely set aside for the planting of a certain food. It is more usual to plant several kinds of food in the same garden.

Unless very small, the whole of the cleared and fenced area is not planted up straight away. An attempt is made to ensure that the fenced area shall be usable for two years, after which time the fence has so far rotted as to make it not worth while repairing. As a rule taro tops and banana suckers are planted first, with perhaps a patch of sweet potatoes. Small bunches of the tops only of potatoes are planted, not the tubers or parts of tubers.

As soon as the taro is eaten, the patch is planted up with sweet potato. As the taro is being consumed, the cut-off tops are planted in a new area within the fence, and when the parent banana stem has borne its one bunch of fruit, the stem is cut down and the suckers dug up and planted in a new spot. Few yams are planted near the coast, but

inland the long fertile slopes of the hills are planted with yams. In this case sections of the tuber are cut off and put in the ground, and when the shoot appears, stakes are thrust into the ground for the vine to cling to.

Yam houses are built in all these gardens, and in the mountain country they are seen everywhere, almost giving the impression that the country is densely populated.

The yam tubers grow in grotesque shapes and sizes, from a few inches long to one, two or even more feet. From their frequent likeness to the human arm the natives name the yam after the human upper arm, *obili*.

When they have eventually planted the whole fenced garden area, and are waiting for the ripening of the last section, they seek, choose, fence, and start to plant, a new area.

For some time visits are paid to the old area, to gather fruit from the grown banana stems and sugar-cane stalks. Sugar-cane is not well cultivated near the coast, though it is planted in every garden.

A species of what looks like undeveloped maize is also grown in small quantities in the coast gardens. This plant possesses all the features of the ordinary maize, except that the ears within the leaf sheath, instead of the familiar cob, consist of a long soft white pencil-shoot, upon which there are no regular rows of grain, but what appears to be a long mass of myriads of flower-buds, so densely packed together that they are almost undiscernible to the naked eye. This ear is boiled intact, and eaten much as asparagus; it possesses a strong floury taste.

They ornament their gardens with gaily-coloured or flowering shrubs.

Very often there is some ceremonial function to come off which gives incentive and inspiration for making a garden: for instance a boy must make a garden for the man he wants to be his father-in-law; or some special death-feast or spirit-feast is to take place.

I do not think, however, our people can be reckoned great gardeners. The gardens are only small, and surprisingly little is planted at a time. Nor do I think that the land is very rich in productive qualities, though I am hardly qualified to speak.

Before leaving the garden I may as well try to describe the very ingenious trap they build in the fence for catching the wary and destructive bush pig. At one or two places in the fence they leave an oblong space about eighteen by twenty-four inches as the opening into a ten-by-twelve-foot passage walled in with timber in the same manner as the fence and covered with a heavy collapsible roof. This consists of heavy logs tied together and laid horizontally along the length of the passage and supported by one principal bearer, one end of which is free, except for a piece of cane or vine attached to it and pulled down over the top of the passage fence to a similar stick thrust through the passage wall, with its inner end only lightly supported by a twig which must be disturbed by anything trying to pass through the passage; any such disturbance releases the string and the whole heavy roof collapses upon the animal, which is held down by the weight of roof until the glad owner comes to his garden and spears the intruder.

Pits also are dug just inside the fence opposite places that pigs have discovered to be weak; sharpened stakes are thrust into the bottom of the pit and the top cleverly covered over to conceal it. I have known nasty wounds caused to unwarned and unwary natives who trod through the light covering on to the spike.

Great tracts of forest and grass country at considerable distances from the village are owned and used as hunting preserves. What and how they hunt there is told in another chapter. In the old days any strangers trespassing on these lands were ambushed, and unceremoniously killed, not so much for what they might take away as from fear of strangers' sorcery. A native community is very chary about parting with its hunting lands.

CHAPTER XIX

Hunting & Fishing

Pig Nets—Wallaby Nets—Traps & Snares—Fishing-nets—Different Ways of Fishing—The *Gauma*—Use of Poison Plant—Pronged-Spear Fishing—Torch-fishing—An Appreciation of the Reef

HUNTING.—From my experience of the Mailu people, I cannot by any stretch of imagination call them good hunters. It may be that the fault is on my side, for I know so little about it myself, and am sure I do not possess the necessary patience to qualify as a hunter. These people seem to me to be too noisy to make good hunters and at the first sight of game to manifest too much excitement and lose their heads. I am afraid I am more interested in the means employed than in the actual hunt (*laiva*), which is rather too strenuous for me in this climate.

What hunting there is, is done on the mainland, and, except for wild pig, wallaby, cuscus and birds, there is not a great quantity of game.

The means of catching employed are: nets, dogs, spears and traps, pits and snares.

Wild-pig hunting is done with long, narrow, large-meshed nets called *loas*. These are made of strong small rope twisted from the bark of wild cotton. The *loa* masters are hereditary owners. They name the *loas* after the hills adjacent to ancestral lands, not after the ancestors themselves.

To the ancestral hill name they add the name of a physical feature, such as valley (*abi*), or of some creature, such as the cuscus (*oura*), or fish-hawk (*amua*), or plant, such as the *arere* (stalk). The *arere* is a rapidly creeping beach-convolvulus.

The best native authorities here speak of this convolvulus stalk as having been used first to encircle the leather-jacket fish, until they learned how to make and use the big ceremonial *gauma* nets. The following are a few specimen names for the pig nets: *Mawora-abi*, *Pomu-amua*, *Pomu-arere*, *Mara-oura*.

They are never used without employing divination and the uttering of spells. This is first done the evening before a hunt, when the old men and owners gather together, and

again the following morning, after the march out in single file with the hunters, each shouldering on a stick a certain amount of the net, while the rest hangs down festoon fashion between each hunter and the next. Coming to an open space, generally by the side of a stream, they use divination again to find out whether the spirit of a deceased person is with them or whether one of their number has broken some public tabu, and then to find out the locality of a pig and the prospects of getting him.

For the ritual of divination (*waga*) two of the hunters hold a stick horizontally between them; over the centre of this they suspend a few leaves as a resting-place (*auaari gabu*) for the spirit. The spirit's presence is indicated by the moving of the leaves in response to questions put by the priest.

This man keeps up the repetition of his address until the leaves *do* move. The spirit is then asked to show, by movement of the leaves again, the hill or locality where the pig will be found. The diviner mentions in turn the various hills of the immediate district. The leaves move at the psychological moment when a certain name is mentioned.

The owner of the net is not necessarily the master of the hunt. The occasion determines the master. A man who has repeatedly seen the tracks of a pig on or near a certain hill reports the fact, and a *laiva* is arranged. This man is called the *orooro-egi*, and after the net has been placed in position —that is, supported upright by sticks or trees for a long distance round the hill—the *orooro-egi* alone ascends the hill, and, discovering the pig, scares it, and shouts to let the others know at once the direction it has taken. They are armed with spears, and if it is taking a direction other than that toward the net, run to cut the pig off, by yelling and shouting—plenty of it. Men with spears stand at intervals along the net, hidden, wherever possible, by trees. If the driving has succeeded, the pig makes a mad lightning rush into the snare and drives its head into a mesh. If then it gets only wounded by a spear, they try to entangle it in the net, but where there is a likelihood of its escaping, one man throws himself on to the back of the pig and holds the front legs until another comes and spears the animal at close quarters.

I have known men to be terribly ripped and bitten, and often killed, by one of these ferocious animals which has been

forced into a corner. The nearest tree is the only safe retreat until help arrives. Some of the hunters carry big-meshed hand-nets to thrust over the head of a pig likely to escape.

The man who kills the animal, or is the first to fall on him, is entitled, not to the " brush," but to the lower jaw and ribs. The owner of the *loa* gets the head. The dividing up is done in the village, to which the pig is carried in triumph, accompanied by the euphonious drawn-out ascending notes of the burden-bearing chant. If the pig caught was a reported one, the *orooro-egi* becomes the master of the hunt and has the right to divide the pig ; if the hunt was arranged because a man in the village announced that he had plenty of produce from his garden and was prepared to provide the vegetables, if they provided the flesh, he becomes the master of the hunt.

The owners of the *loas* are also the owners of the *eu*, or wallaby nets. The latter take exactly the same names as the former and are hereditarily handed down. The same ritual accompanies their use. The *eus* are made of much finer cord, which comes from the bark of young breadfruit saplings. It is even tougher than *waru* (wild cotton).

Large tracts of grass country between forest patches are reserved for wallaby (*mani*) hunting with nets, but individual hunters with dogs or spears are not considered trespassers upon those reserves. The natives evidently have some idea of their fellows' prowess or otherwise !

About October or November, when the long grass is dry and mature, before the coming of the monsoon rains, notice is sent out that a certain patch of grass will be burned on a certain day. Crowds come in with their *eus*, dogs and spears. The *eus* are supported by sticks thrust perpendicularly into the ground all along the two sides of the grass patch ; they are placed just on the edge of the confining forest, secure from the fire. The visiting villages choose their own positions as they come. The grass is fired at the windward end, and a row of men with spears and dogs stand behind the fire. The near wallabies jump back through the fire and are speared while still blinded by the smoke and flame ; those that escape the spear are chased by the dogs, with their masters in hot pursuit. Men with spears and dogs also stand along the sides watching their nets. Visitors camp near the hunting-grounds in shelters erected for the hunt, and fires

and smoking apparatus are fixed up everywhere. Those who have come from a distance smoke and re-smoke their bag to take back to their respective villages. If weather conditions are good, this goes on for a week or more, a different patch being burned off each day. I have known the bag of one small village for one day to be more than sixty wallabies and one or two bush pigs.

Birds are snared by nets, or string slip-knot nooses attached to a small sapling stuck in the ground and bent over to form a spring, which is released as the bird alights on a twig arranged for the purpose, just above the bait. To catch wallaby, small boys set snares (*kaea*) of slip-knot nooses along their tracks.

The bird-of-paradise is snared by means of a bell-shaped net attached to a long thin cord placed over a branch and brought down to the ground, where it is held by hand. The tree selected is one of the trees where the birds dance.

Bright-coloured parrots are snared by nets let down over the nest at nesting time.

At certain periods of the year the eggs of the mound-building scrub hen and scrub pheasant are dug up from the mounds in great numbers.

Alligators are caught in collapsible-roof traps, such as are built into garden fences to catch the trespassing bush pig. These traps can frequently be seen on river banks. Dead dogs or stinking fish are used as bait.

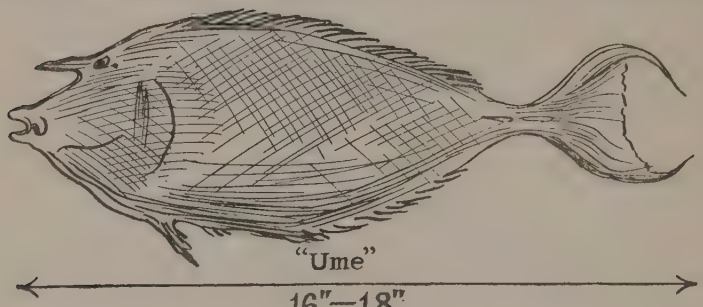
Fishing.—Naturally enough the coast people indulge in fishing far more than in hunting, for fishing rewards their efforts so much more bountifully. They use nets, pronged spears, hand-scoop nets and fish-poisoning plant.

1. *Nets and Net-fishing.*—I know of nine different kinds of net called after the particular fish that the mesh of the net is most likely to catch. To catch that fish they are taken out on to the reef at appropriate seasons. The two largest nets, which I will speak of last, the dugong and the leather-jacket nets, are made of strong rope of twisted *waru* bark. Except for the hand-scoop nets, the others are made of good fibre string from the aerial roots of the "screw-pine" genus of pandanus-tree. This tree in its many varieties is prized by the natives for its strong-scented flowers, as well as for its sweet juice.

The fibre is sorted out according to the size of net to be

made from the twisted cord. A double-ended grooved netting needle is employed and the string is wound on it. The mesh-pin varies in width according to the size of loop required for the mesh and consists of a thin bit of wood, or frequently of tortoiseshell. These little tools are carefully treasured in the natives' small string bags. The needle is really beautifully made.

The floats for the net are of various shapes, are cut out of thin light wood (flat), and have a hole pierced through for attachment to the net. This is weighted with dead shells through which a hole has been worn by their rough usage at the hands of the sea on the beach or has been artificially perforated by tapping on a stone. The only form of ritual used in connection with these nets is that of a private charm



LEATHER-JACKET FISH

(See p. 183)

in the shape of a tiny jacket of bark from a tree, different in the case of each owner; the packet is enclosed in string and attached to a more or less central mesh in the net. This charm is called *beno*. In one form of fishing, *saea*, to be mentioned by and by, divination is employed.

The reef, in all its wonderful changing aspects by day and night, affords the people their happy fishing-ground.

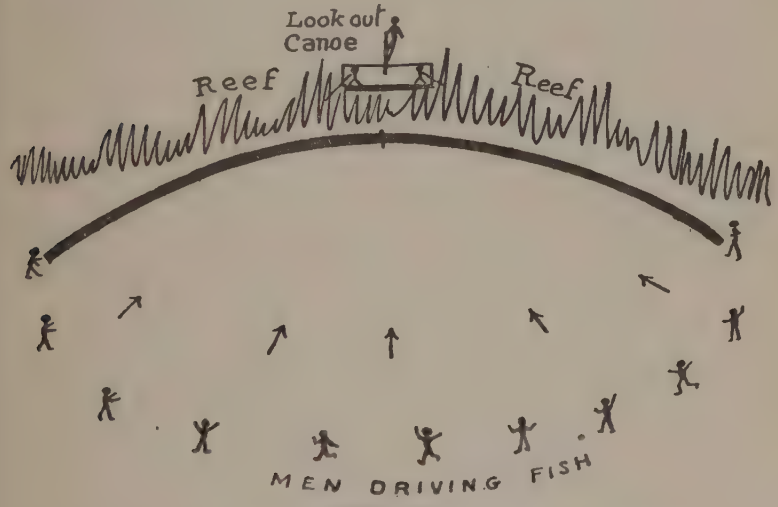
The different kinds of net are used according to the seasons and the different stages of the tide—coming in or going out, or dead low-water, when only pools remain containing fish.

The following are a few of the methods used in net-fishing:

(a) *Saea*.—A number of nets of about the same size fastened together at their ends to form one very long one; at a convenient state of the tide laid down in a semicircle over the reef; men in small canoes behind (that is, to sea-

ward) are set to watch the net silently, so as to keep it from floating out, and to prop it up at intervals with sticks as the tide goes out. At dead low-water the owners of the nets, with their friends, come to collect the fish in the net and in the pools in which the fish have sought shelter from the obstacle. Divination is employed to find out the best place for the *saea*.

(b) *Odakori*.—Two men stand hip-deep in the water, each holding the half of a long net, which, upon sighting the fish, they pay out in a semicircle as rapidly as they can, while their fellows, beating the water with sticks or kicking it, drive the fish into the net.



(See p. 186)

(c) *Waru*.—A form of *saea* employed as the water on the reef is getting shallow.

(d) *Ueue*.—A single man throwing and paying out his small net in an attempt to catch fish that have run for shelter under a coral rock.

(e) *Wopa* (deception).—Stones and lumps of coral put round in a circle at low-water. Bait in shape of sea-urchin is thrown on to the stones and inside the circle; when the tide has risen, the stones are encircled by a net and gradually drawn in, the weight string is pulled in and the net raised. Some of the best kinds of fish are caught in this way.

(f) *Bagibagi*.—Men stand on either side of shallow parts of the reef, or reef passages, and as the tide comes in they

throw stones into the water and frighten the fish into the crevices of the coral, and then encircle them with a net.

(g) *Boni*.—A method employed at new moon, when it is low tide very early in the morning (*biga aama*), and therefore high tide about midnight. Men in canoes tie the float-line (*gege*) of the net to a long line of stakes previously erected. This done, the canoes and men retire to the foreshore, leaving one man at each central position between the stakes; as these men feel the presence of fish against the net they give the signal arranged, and the long line of small canoes advance from the shore, each with one man bearing a torch and another poling; they drive the fish into the net, and the watchers at the extreme ends pull up the stakes and bring the ends of the net together and encircle the fish.

(h) *Dui*.—By small canoe just outside the reef. The men jump into the water as they cast the net.

(i) *Saea deudeu* (drag-net).—Used on the sand beaches of the mainland, where there are no fringing shore reefs. The nets are paid out from canoes, which bring the ends ashore, where the nets are dragged in by hand. The nets would be torn to shreds if this method were employed on the reef.

(j) *Oeata*.—A method employed to catch mullet in the smooth-water bays on the mainland, where there is a mangrove foreshore. Two rows of stakes in the inshore row are placed in readiness completely to encircle a wide stretch of mangrove. At a convenient state of the tide men go out paddling silently in their canoes with their nets prepared. One net is tied to the line of lower inner stakes so as to hang in perpendicular fashion, with its weights (*dae*) intact, the other nets, from which all floats and weights have been removed, are stretched in an almost horizontal position from the inner stakes at the height of the perpendicular net to some distance up the outer and higher line of stakes. The idea is to catch in the horizontal net the mullet attempting to jump the perpendicular net as the tide goes out. The men in canoes just outside the stakes hold hand-scoop nets ready to catch any lusty high jumper or scoop it out of the net. The *Oeata* is a very picturesque method of catching fish.

2. *Fish Poison*.—Fish poison is invariably employed at those seasons of the year when the reef becomes bare in the daytime. It is often associated with net-fishing, when the

fish left by the tide take refuge from the net under the coral fringes of the deep pools. The stupefier or poison they use is the juice from the roots of a vine, *Derris elliptica*, which I believe is a powerful poison. The plant, which they cultivate in their gardens and close to the villages, is called by our people *tua*.[1] The juice is extracted by pounding the root between stones to disintegrate it; the bits are tied to the end of a stick and thrust into the numerous cracks and crannies in the coral or under the stones and rocks in the pools. In the water it gives out a creamy white fluid. In a very short space of time the whole population of the pool, after swimming feebly and aimlessly about for a moment or two, come to the surface and lie over on their sides. Hand-scoop nets soon remove them from their natural element. Fish, when caught in this way, has no different flavour, and if such fish eaten is dangerous to man, I ought to have been dead long ago. I was informed by an analyst, to whom I sent a specimen of the root, that the juice from a similar species had been used by poachers of salmon in Scotland, and for catching salmon in Canada. The inland people here also use it in the deep pools of the rivers.

But far the most important mode of fishing, from a social standpoint, is associated with the *gauma*, a net used principally for catching the leather-jackets of the reef (*ume* —i.e. *naseus brevirostris*). This *gauma* is called the *ume gauma* to distinguish it from the *opi* (dugong) *gauma*. It is made of a strong fine rope of twisted *waru* bark (wild cotton), and has a large mesh. It is weighted with a species of trochus shells, which are threaded by holes made in their bases and tied on to the weight-line. The floats consist of skittles of light wood with holes drilled through their bases for fastening on to the float-line. The one central float differs from all its fellows, and consists of a carved-out and ornamented piece of wood resembling a *ume* in shape and, as we shall shortly see, serving a particular purpose. This float is called *gubina* (master), and has attached to it the white cowrie shell, the mark of the headship of a family clan of ownership.

The nets are not very long nor of uniform width, for they measure from three to four feet at the ends, and nine to twelve feet in the middle. They are owned by the heads of the sub-clans.

The *gaumas* are called by the name of some far back ancestral family land and the name of the fish-hawk (*amua*) of that locality.

I think the Mailu Island people (the folk on the mainland opposite own no *gaumas*) learned the art of the *gauma* from the Aroma people, with whom in bygone ages Mailu Islanders seem to have been closer neighbours than now and with whom now and then they fought bitterly. Mailu at one time burned down one of the big Aroma villages and one Kerepunu village, and "killed all the inhabitants"! Papari also informs me that before they knew the art of the *gauma*, the cordon of men used to take into the water a long line of beach-convolvulus stalk (*arere*), surround the fish with it, and catch them with their hands and tiny spears (*puri*). Eventually they learned the art and the spells associated with it. This is interesting, because some of the spells refer to the *arere* and *puri*. For example—and there is no space for more than one—Papari's ancestral family *gauma* is named *Oe-amua*. *Oe* is the name of a sand beach where Magaubo village now stands near Table Point. *Amua*, of course, is the fish-hawk associated with that locality.

Papari's ancestral spell uttered at the magical anointing (*amamani*) before use is:

"*Batu arere ma gauma velave ei*"
"Table Point convolvulus stalk *gauma* courageous."

(This stanza is to make the *gauma* strong, *kisaisaisi*.)

"*Oe puri ina gauma velave ei*."
"*Oe* beach dart my *gauma* courageous."

(This stanza is to enclose catch, *maisaisi*.)

The day before using the *gauma* the master scrapes a coconut, wraps up the scrapings with the chopped leaves of a beach-growing plant in a piece of coconut sheathing fibre, and ties the package to the *gauma* at any one of its meshes as a magical charm. Looking at it in the evening, he speaks to it as follows:—

"*Serito serito avaga serito*
Pagaru tupato tupato."

This is an Aroma form of address, meaning *ume* in plenty plenty, lobsters in plenty plenty, *barus* (another

A WAONA.

A single dug-out with a solid outrigger.

Boy on Coral Reef Spearing Fish with bow and arrow.

Ceremonial Cooking by men only.

Cooking Sago and scraped coconut boiled in young coconut water. Only new pots may be used for fear that tabus may be broken. The two nearest figures are sorcerers.

coral fish) in plenty. These charms are not only in the Aroma dialect. This address of Papari's takes the form of a chant, which the owner sounds to the net at night after all others in the house are asleep. Towards evening the net is spread out on the village street and its meshes are repaired. In the morning the *gauma* is carried on to the canoe.

If they suspect that a man is on board who has eaten tabued (*neburu*) coconuts they employ divination to bring home his guilt. The diviner gets two of the men to take a rod (or, if not already sailing, the helm, *dora*, of the rudder), to thrust it through one of the meshes of the net, and while facing one another to raise a part of the net slightly. He, the diviner, sitting at a distance, chews ceremonially and asks the net (really the spirit of an ancestor) if they shall go, and if they will get fish; in Mailuan:

" *Gea orebe mai la uleisesa i?* "
" We fish kill to shall set out? "

" *Gea orebe maisesa i?* "
" We fish shall kill? "

As there is no movement of the net, he addresses it by name:

" *Batu-amua ga ada egi ena boi orebe da maisesa i?* "
" Batu-amua, you that man his spirit fish not we catch? "

" *Seevai orebe oma maisesana, ne egi boi kokoa?* "
" No! fish to-day we shall catch, that man spirit no? "

In place of the words " *ada egi* " or " *ne egi* " (that man) the name of each man on the canoe is mentioned in turn, and there is no movement until the psychological name is uttered; then the *gauma* moves, and Jonah is let down over the side of the ship, a humiliated, if not a wiser, man. He is told he is possessed by a spirit (*Ga boilaga*—you are spirit indwelt). His eventual release from spiritual possession is related elsewhere.

Mentioning the different spots, they go through the same process to divine the part of the reef where they will get fish. If the fishing is to take place round the home reef, the women and children are warned against making a noise in the village.

The favourite *ume* fishing-ground, when season and

weather permit, is Arieu, a big patch of reef about seven or eight miles to south-west of Mailu Island.

Reaching the particular spot, they pole the canoe silently about the edge of the reef, with a man at the masthead directing them as he sees the typical trembling of the water about a school of *umes*. He gives the word for letting down the net from the canoe, and if upon doing so they see the tail of the *gubina* float pointing shorewards, they turn the whole heavy net round so that the head of the *gubina* may face the *umes* as they advance into the net. The *gubina* is so tied to the float-line of the net that it shall always be at right angles to it, and psychologically there is only one way in which the net must hang to catch the fish. As soon as the net is let down, most of the men jump from the canoe, and one man takes up his stand at each end of the net, on the reef. The position of the net is maintained in a semicircle so that the wider central part is in the deeper water. Other men on the reef gradually close in and drive the *umes* into the net, the two men bring the ends together, and the others dive under and lift up (*peepee*) the weight-line. At the same time others on the canoe start pulling in the net, and the "catch" is started, to help the pulling and lifting, which they do by jerks at the end of each stanza of the song:

1. "*Mogu-amua Oo*" (pull and lift).
2. "*Amua duba Oo*" (pull and lift).
3. "*Lagaru para Oo*" (pull and lift).
4. "*Ume magani Oo*" (pull and lift).
5. "*Ume akou lialia*" (pull and lift).
6. "*Baru akou lialia*" (pull and lift).
7. "*Ume, avaea, korikou lialia A . . . i, A . . . i, Ai.*"

1. "Name of gauma!
2. All fish-hawks!
3. All dry reefs!
4. *Umes*! [Same in Aroma dialect.]
5. Great *umes*!
6. Great rock cod!
7. *Umes*, lobsters, pull together, lift together, all together, all together!"

The above is like a sailor's chanty, to inspire to effort and to keep the time. At the end of each line there is a pull

and a lift, getting stronger and stronger as the load reaches the gunwale of the canoe. A canoe sometimes brings back two or three hundred *umes* from a successful trip to Arieu.

Sometimes, if two or three canoes have gone out together, one canoe's catch will be given to another clan on the understanding that that other clan has to go off sago-making, and return a bundle of sago for each *ume* so given. When the catch is large, most of it is smoked and taken across to Woworo or some other mainland village near sago, and later on is paid for in sago.

There is only one *opi gauma* (dugong net) on Mailu Island. The dugong prefer the reefs, muddier, and therefore more overgrown with weeds. For instance, as Domara, in Cloudy Bay, is within the barrier reef, and therefore its shore reefs or patches and sunken sandbanks opposite the river mouth afford good breeding places for this sea-mammal, it owns a lot of *opi gaumas*. Laruoro village also owns dugong nets and frequently catches dugong. Practically the same ritual is observed as over the *ume gauma*. The names of dugong nets, however, are taken, not from ancestral land but from the first ancestor of the sub-clan to make one, with the name of the fish-hawk (*amua*) again added. Dugong is generally caught at night, when breeding or suckling its young, upon a known feeding-ground which is watched by the natives during the summer months.

It is caught by being surrounded by the net, which is drawn closer and closer about it till it is so entangled it cannot come up to the surface for breath. Often one man dives under and lies on top of the dugong, with his arms round its neck, as it were, until the ends of the net are brought together. The capture of a dugong is always announced by the blowing of conch shells, and neighbouring people come in to share the catch in return for vegetable or sago food.

3. *Pronged-Spear Fishing.*—Another form of fishing indulged in by men and boys is that of fishing with a pronged spear (*lui*). Youths can be seen in the late afternoon, after their " bathe and comb up," strutting along the foreshores, adopting their conceited walk and looking as if they thought the whole place belonged to them. On such walks they do not catch much fish—they do not expect to—the spear is part of the ornament to be admired.

At a similar time of day, about the bays of the mainland, youths get into tiny canoes and go off singly, armed with a many-pronged spear (*udi*). These spears are used to catch such fish as rise near the surface and float there.

During *lioro* time (spring and early summer), when a species of garfish (*auau*) visits the coast in great numbers, torch-fishing with the pronged spear is indulged in at night, in the calmer water over the reef. They go out in small canoes in couples, one standing in front with uplifted burning torch in one hand and spear in the other, while his companion sits aft paddling and steering the canoe. Attracted by the light, the fish come near the surface, and, without actually throwing, the boy with the torch plunges the spear on to the fish by a swift movement. Should he notice one of the fish lying still some distance down in the water, he immediately puts out his torch; experience has taught him that such fish intend to make a spring. I have known cases in which men and boys have been pierced by the sharp elongated under jaw of these fish and seriously wounded.

4. *Torch-fishing.*—Women and girls never seem tired of going out torch-fishing when the reef is left nearly dry during the spring and summer nights. Night after night they turn the dark coast-line into a brilliantly lit frontage. When the sea is calm and a gentle land breeze keeps the torches burning brightly it is one of the fascinating experiences on Mailu Island to be at a distance and see the lights all round the mainland coast and on the reefs of the two coral islands dancing between one another and up and down. But it must be a gruesome business to walk about on the reef at night when the next step may land you on to some slimy slug such as *bêche de mer*, or on to some spiked wretch of a thing that stings and poisons terribly through its spikes. Yet at midnight, or three A.M.—any time in the night—out they turn, each woman with a great pile of torches on her back suspended from her forehead. They go out after crustaceans and cuttle-fish (*guiva*), while one species of sea-urchin is a special delicacy. The woman carries at her side a rude basket plaited from coconut-leaf, into which she puts her catch. In one corner of the bottom of it she has half-a-coconut shell, into which she pours the edible part of the

sea-urchin. I have eaten this; it reminded me of the soft part of crab; it looks like it too, and is very rich! The reef woman also carries a hand net (*odi*) and a stick to kill the cuttle-fish before picking it up. I have never walked out on the reef at night. But, in the daytime . . . !

During part of May, and June, July and August, at spring tide, with the tide lowest about noon, everybody is on the reef who has not got to go to school. The nets are left for the time being; youths are busy with short spears and darts turning over all movable boulders, and others put poison plant in the pools. The various catches are threaded on to lengths of cane. Old men, now away from the nets, stand over their little grandsons with their tiny nets, initiating them into the arts of reefing. Some of the young fellows are preparing circles of stones ready for the incoming tide. Every nook is searched. Women and girls pick up shell-fish of all descriptions, and here and there on tables of coral you come across baskets or shells containing the most weird objects, presently to be picked up again and carried home. The tiny fish in pools, overlooked by the men, are scooped out by the women's hand nets. Not much that is edible is left to meet the next incoming tide.

5. *The Reef*.—Near the foreshore the coral is all dead, and worn flat, with deposits of sand and earth in which grow low sea grass and weed. Farther out from the shore the reef becomes a coral lawn of brittle upstanding coral grass! With one's back to the sun it is a never-failing wonder of tint and tone. Every upstanding pinnacle of dead coral is tipped with faint-tinted new live coral deposited during the six months or so since the last "low reefs"—as we call them here. Some of these tints are pale yellow, some orange, some indescribable blue, and some purple. As the eyes scan the near distance, this part of the reef looks in places as if it were covered with the wild mustard plant found in England near cornfields. In other spots it looks like large beds of pale purple blossom, and elsewhere it has a pale delicate blue. Around the pools, where the coral deposits never exposed to the air are always growing, the tints and forms are much bolder and more varied. Here the most brilliantly coloured and fantastically marked fish dart in and out of the crevices, grottos and forests of

coral fairyland. Starfish of the brightest scarlet and most perfect blue lie at the bottom of the pools in their crystal bath, defying you to disturb their sun-given splendour.

The edge of the reef is the rock garden. Wonder after wonder, beyond all words, is revealed as the swell falls and rises, forming fountains and cataracts, rivulets and pure white foam. The water rushes in there and hurries out here with its own peculiar metallic sound. At the edge everything is bolder in coral outline; huge, round, heavy, nearly smooth masses are interspersed with great cabbage growths, the outer leaves of which stand out as flat tables of thin coral edged with purple. Forest trees with stately trunks, and branches covered as with autumn foliage, stand upon massive coral ledges. Mystery caves, little and great, can be seen through the clear depths of the water, and their tenants, great and small, bright and dowdy, composed and fidgety, slim and round, harmless and cannibal, defiantly float and swim about, loving life and home as much as I.

The never-resting tide commands retreat! The harvest of the sea and reef is taken home again along the hot sandy beach to the grim and grimy houses, where hungry wants are satisfied, just for that day.

GUBINA, OR MASTER FLOAT

This is fixed to the centre of the upper edge of the fish-net, with smaller floats on either side

NOTE

[1] It is called *tuba* by the Malays in the Straits, and an interesting and informative article on the effects of *tuba* was published by J. Argyll Campbell in *The Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiastic Society*, July 1916, p. 129.

CHAPTER XX

A Miscellany

General Knowledge—Yarns—Arithmetic—Heavenly Bodies—Sun, Moon, Stars

NO one can doubt that the native has pretty cute eyes and uses them to discriminate what objects will suit his purpose best.

This general utilitarian knowledge is fairly wide. It is shown, I think, by his vocabulary. Without any trouble the natives give me the names of one hundred and seventeen trees, including thirty-seven different edible fruit-bearing trees. They tell me in a very short space of time the names of one hundred and ninety-one fish, and sixty-nine edible crustaceans picked up on the reef or dug up from the sand beaches.

I have the native Mailu names for forty-nine wild flowers and tree flowers, most of which are scent-giving. We have already noted that they have at least twenty-seven named varieties of banana.

They know their local geography and geographical names well. Every bay, river, cape, promontory, isthmus, valley and hill is named and locally known.

They reel off the names of forty-six different birds, and can tell where and how most of them build their nests and many of their habits. For example, they told me that the great hornbill (*bina*) rarely flies about singly, but nearly always with its mate, and that after the pair have made their nest in the hollow of a tree and the hen has laid her eggs, the male bird plasters her in with clay, leaving only a hole through which he can stick his ponderous beak and feed her. This goes on till the young ones are fledged.

As I was coming round the shores of Table Bay one night, after leaving Table Point at midnight to get the low tide and hard sand, I heard my boys talking of the hornbill. They told me we should see great numbers. It was moonlight and the night was perfectly still. On that shore there

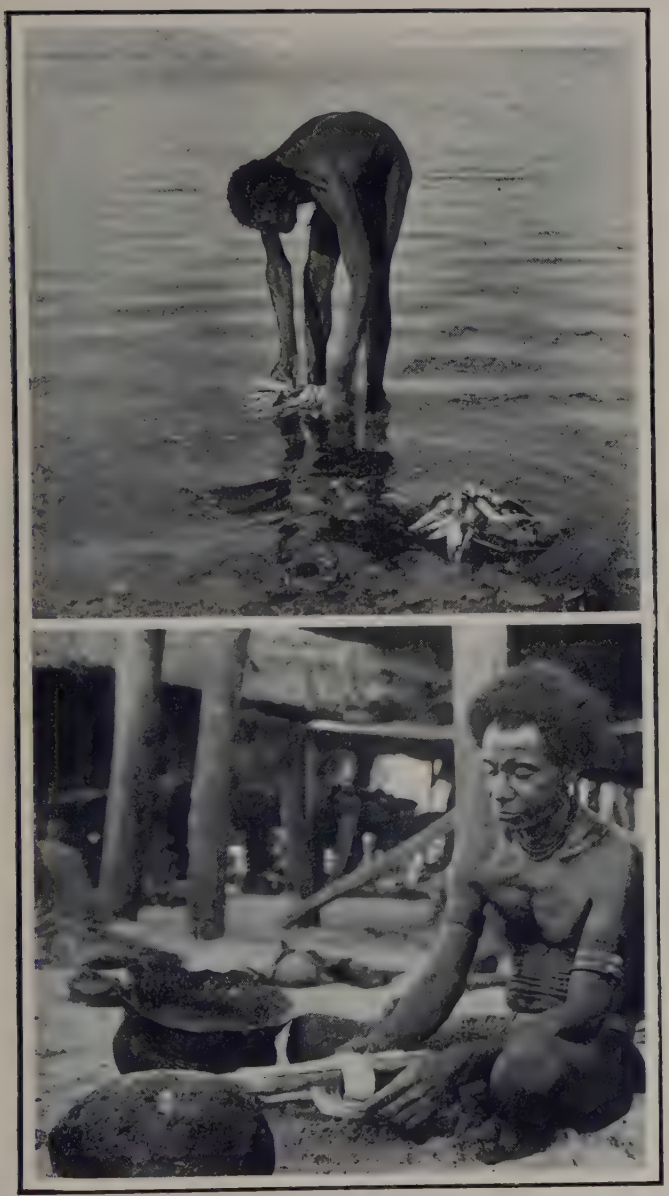
is no tree to be seen but casuarinas. These are self-sown, so thick, so uniform in height, that to traverse that lonely shore is one of the most trying and monotonous walks along this coast. We had fifteen miles of it that night. I had always walked it by daylight before. I truly thanked the hornbills for one of their habits, not known to me till then, which helped to pass the time along that dreary beach. At many places along that casuarina line these heavy birds were perched in such numbers, and so closely along the slender top branches of these pines, as to bend them right over and bear them down. Many of these inhabited patches of casuarina were a quarter of a mile long, and they occurred at intervals most of the way from Table Point to Dalava, twelve to thirteen miles. I protested that these must be flying-foxes, and I was curtly asked by my boys if I had ever seen flying-foxes resting at night away from gardens, or had ever seen a flying-fox standing on, instead of hanging from, the branch? I said little more. I told them to get bits of wood, make a rush up the beach and shout to scare some off. The air became full of the characteristic rustle of *bina* wings, and as they circled over our heads for a moment before settling again I could see their huge beaks.

The boys told me that in the morning they fly off to their feeding-grounds farther inland, and that it is only during the "westerly" that they spend the nights there. It is quite easy to see that the easterly season would make these perches untenable.

A native companion on a bush track inland asked me if I knew the use of the long wire projecting from the ends of the tails of birds-of-paradise. In answer to my negative he said: "We New Guinea men say that they work these wires down into holes of rotten parts of trees, then draw them out again and pass their beaks along them to get ants or anything else that the wires may have brought out!"

I leave this yarn to be criticized by better students of bird life than I. I am afraid, though, that their criticism will not change the beliefs of my informant!

Talking of birds reminds me of another native yarn. He says the rook was once white, but a Torres Strait pigeon, white till then, asked the rook to tattoo her. The rook complied, made the dye in a coconut shell, and blackened



An Old Man Sorting out his Catch of Fish.
Grinding Down an Armshell.

the wing tips and tail feathers of the pigeon. The pigeon in her pride (*aroai de*) strutted about and upset the pigment all over the rook, since when it has been entirely black.

When last at home in England I went to the London Zoo on a miserably cold, foggy day. I visited my friend the Torres Strait pigeon. I saw only one and felt like getting into the cage with it. I could hardly recognize it, for London was trying to make it like the rook. We both felt cold. The fog was in my throat and I doubt if my tropical friend could coo.

There is a story here I have heard again and again, among both the Mailu and inland people, of a cruel sport practised on the beautiful bird that builds bowers and playgrounds. The natives call the bird *leleuru* (playhouse). I cannot credit the story, nor have I succeeded in finding an eyewitness. They only say that the old men tell them. The story goes that a man sets a light to the bower and places a coconut shell of water near. The bird tries to put out the fire by flapping its wings in the water, which it shakes out over the burning "house," and repeats the process until so many of its feathers are singed and it is so exhausted that it cannot fly. Then the wretched sportsman catches it to eat! They also say that the bird scolds (*areai*) anyone who approaches near its nest.

Arithmetic.—A Mailu man counts on his fingers by tens, closing down each finger, beginning with the thumb, on to the palm as he proceeds; on the completion of five he holds up his clenched fist and proceeds to count the other hand in the same way; that completed, he puts the two closed fists together, counting the multiples of ten by the number of times he puts the two closed fists together till he arrives at ten times ten, which he calls *Nanau gabana omu*.

As we have seen in his calendar, he measures time by using the positions of sun and moon, tides, winds, and the sprouting, flowering and seeding of certain grasses and deciduous trees.

Only he himself knows how he measures or judges long distances, and he cannot convince me he is right. I suppose he speaks as one who has more time than I, and probably more patience. Shorter lengths, logs and rope, house posts

or plates, he measures by *loa*—finger tips to finger tips of outstretched arms, practically six feet.

He values wealth, as we have seen under "armshells" and "trade," by the standards set by custom. For foodstuffs the unit is the food value of one pot (*omu*).

1 pot = 1 bundle of sago or 1 bunch of bananas or 1 *gaima* (10 or 12) of taro, or 1 basket of sweet potatoes, or 1 bundle of sugar-cane, or 1 *ume* (leather-jacket fish).

The following names for eatables in fours are given :—

4 taro = 1 *doa*; 4 sweet potatoes = 1 *butu*; 4 fish = 1 *laveru*.

Similarly for feast purposes (*Ivaragevena*) the Mailuans count coconuts in fours :

1 *gau* = 4 nuts; 1½ *gau* = 1 *bara* = 6 nuts; 2 *gau* = 1 *areba* = 8 nuts; 3 or 4 *gau* = 1 *baiva* = 12 or 16 nuts.

After the coconuts are collected together for a feast, the master, judging by eye few or many, tells his helpers to distribute first one *ivaragevena*, or first one *bara* or one *areba* to each *dubu*. Then he repeats the process according to the number of nuts remaining over.

The depth of particular types of household nets is measured by the number of *ini* (meshes); the length is measured in *loa* as above.

Families of more than two children are spoken of as complete families, and are called *lugu*. Men of the same build and height, either brothers or strangers, are said to be *valaba*.

Heavenly Bodies.—The natives say that the sun is swallowed at sunset by an *urau*, a particularly large-mouthed fish, which swims again to the east, taking all night to accomplish the journey, and vomits the sun out from its mouth again in the morning.

The first man to see the new moon announces it by a loud call, "*Dovele erieriaa*." The unfortunate individual becomes the *tabutabu egi* (chosen man): one will call out to him, "So may my sago appear"; another, "So may my string of fish come," etc., and he is supposed to give these things to those calling first. This is yet one more instance where natives get their food at another's expense.

I am told that men often enough will not proclaim the fact that they saw the moon first, lest they have to provide the things called out by others.

The shadows on the face of the moon are the claw-marks of the scrub hen, the mound-building bird, who once flew to the moon, took hold of it with its red claws, then flew back again, and got so out of breath by its journey that it has never flown more than very short distances since. The call of this bird gives rise to its name, *karauso*. It is heard mostly at night, and the natives say that it announces the change of the tide. From its nocturnal habits and calls it has become associated with the moon, more especially because of its activity on bright moonlit nights.

A star appearing close to the moon is spoken of as the moon's wife; and menstruation of both married and unmarried women is caused through their having had sexual connection with the moon.

The appearance of a " ring round the moon " announces the fact that in some village they are having a *Damorea* dance (a woman's dance performed by slowly going round and round men drummers). The ring round the moon is a reflection of the performance. The eclipse of the moon is caused by *Karaveni*, the flying sorceress, who wraps up the moon in mats.

Little notice is taken of the stars. *Gaumawanowano* rises in the dark very early hours, to wake up, as its name implies, those who are intending to go out with the *gauma* fishing-net. The morning star, *Larani*, gets up just before dawn.

Small canoes are often named after the Pleiades (*Wuniara*), which constellation is said to resemble the share of a small canoe.

Orion is called *Boraa eva* (pig-carrying pole).

Where two or three small stars of redder tinge appear together in the heavens they are called *vidi* (orphans). The Milky Way is merely named *Obulaibaibara* without any particular significance attached to the name as far as I can find. They speak of it as a thin cloud associated with certain weather.

I cannot find any legend or theory about the comet, to which they give the name *Bana vitiu* (*vitiu* = star).

A falling star is spoken of as *Karaveni*, the sorceress,

going on her flight to exercise her evil on some village towards which the star is falling.

Legend as to the Origin of the Mailu People.—According to Papari, who heard it from his father, the ancestors of the Mailu people came from behind Farm Bay. Farm Bay is between sixty and seventy miles east of Mailu in the Southern Massim territory. They lived on a hill near Waisina, this side of Savaia, called in those days Silooea. The coast natives noticed that their gardens were continually being trespassed upon, and eventually set a watch, which proved the culprits to be a strange people from the hills. At last Mailu asked the Savaia people to let them live with them on their land. They were told that there was no room. One section of the Mailu ancestors had departed westwards over the hills round the shores of Mullens Harbour through the Boroai country and on past Gadaisu. The remaining section was anxious to get to the water as soon as possible, and, failing to get accommodation among the Savaians, came to Homla, repeating their request there. When they got the same answer they travelled to Mullens Harbour along the coast, made rafts and came west.

When Mr W. E. Armstrong, M.A., Cambridge, late Government Assistant Anthropologist, was doing field-work in the South-east Division, I told him this legend and asked him if he would inquire whether the Savaia people of to-day knew anything of it. He kindly did so and sent me the account as given to him by old men at Savaia. These people, moreover, pointed out to Mr Armstrong the position of the caves in the hills where the Mailuans had dwelt, and also said that they were the offspring of a snake that lived in those caves. Papari did not tell me this last!

Personally, I think that whether the original Mailu tribe worked their way down the north-east coast, or, coming in canoes from Melanesia, landed near the end of the peninsula, they tried to get to the south-east coast and found the end of the peninsula already occupied by a people who thought them undesirable neighbours. The tribe broke into two sections, and the first section trekked along westwards as we have seen, and in their journeying became decidedly affected by the culture of the people they passed through.

Coming along the shores of Orangerie Bay they intermarried with the hill people at the back, and finally occupied the hills opposite Mailu Island. It is generally accepted by the people, for instance, that Delebai occupied at one time the Udama hill, and upon their coming nearer the coast the Dimuga established their metropolis on Udama. The Mailu Island people and the villages they have formed west, in contrast to the hill folk, bear very little resemblance, physically, temperamentally and socially, to the Massim, but in the matter of houses, village construction, temperament and physical appearance bear strong resemblance to the Aroma people, with whom at one time I think the ancestors of the Mailu people must have lived in closer contact. But all this is hypothesis.

Origin of Sailing Canoes.—Following on the above legend, Papari says that the original two chief men of Mailu were Waroula and Mailuula. The former used to live at Woworo, Mailuula lived on Mailu Island. The island man said to the Woworo man: "You make me a canoe, and I will give you coconuts, pots and skirts, and also for these things will continue to buy from you taro and sago."

The wife of Mailuula was Mailuoura, and she it was who first made pots. The canoe having no sail, the Mailu people went to the Bailebo river for rushes, and Mailuula's wife plaited the rushes into strips of matting, and the men laid these alongside one another on the village street. Mailuula, after scratching on the sand first one design and then another, decided on the present design.

Goigoikiso came from the east trying all kinds of wood for canoes, but found that they cracked. He eventually came to Mailu and asked what wood they used; they told him *moda*, and he said that up to then he had found *oaelo* the best.

From Dedele westwards the people knew nothing about making canoes. Like the Mailu people, Papari added, those people only recently learned to make them.

Sago Legend.—There are two big rocks standing at the foot of a hill at the back of Table Point, their names are Boniva and Baniva. They are two men turned to stone, and they watch over the sago they planted. These two men were once returning from Lea, where they had been making

sago, and their loads were so heavy that the poles smashed. They broke up most of the sago they had made and threw it over the ground. It grew up everywhere it was thrown. Right away to Boru also this sago was sown by the two men. This is why Mailu and Dalava and all the other villages call upon these two men in prayer (*uura*=spell) when they are chopping down the sago-palms.

Native legend also has it that the original owner of Mailu Island was a woman, whom they call Idaubake. Idaubake was a pot-maker and owned Mailu Island for its clay. In her time there was a great flood which caused Mailu Island and all but the high hills on the mainland to be submerged. In consequence, Idaubake went and lived with two mythical beings identified with the two mountains so distinctly seen from the island; these are Mounts Dayman and Simpson.

She returned to Mailu when the water subsided.

To account for the presence of Mailu Island where it now is, and the first settlement of people upon it, there is another interesting story: when some of the ancestors of these people lived near Aroma, they came east between the seasons to fish; when they reached a big reef where there was a large quantity of fish, one man threw his fish-spear from the canoe at a great fish and the spear went true.

Alone, however, he was not strong enough to pull up the spear. All on the canoe came to help him, and they pulled and pulled till up from the sea-bottom they pulled Mailu Island!

The yarn is interesting because Mailu Island is volcanic and almost throughout formed of conglomerate rock, with innumerable round stones cemented together like concrete, which appear to have been washed and worn in some river bed.

CHAPTER XXI

Warfare

Leko (Fight)—*Gara* (War)—Weapons—Ancestral War-cries—The *Torus*—Preparation for War—The *Gobu Egi*—Head-hunting

WAR, in the Mailu language, is spoken of as *gara*. A stand-up fight, the result of a quarrel, when some private individual is generally the cause, is known as *leko*.

The *leko* might become so serious, and often did in the old days, as to lead to *gara*. These *lekos*, or brawls, very often take place nowadays; the commonest occasion is a feast, when some individual is not satisfied and his village or clan take the matter up as a slight to themselves.

With a friend, who was my guest at the time, I was present at such a quarrel. I was not surprised when it arose, because I had noticed that all those who were going from our neighbourhood took spears and impromptu weapons with them, and I knew that some of these fellows were to perform the *dauge* dance at Ori where the feast was to take place.

The chief man at Ori courteously led us to a house in the village where we could get a good view of the dances. There was a great crowd of people and a noticeably large number of Daui visitors. They are the most western of the Southern Massim, and their territory is immediately adjacent to that of the most eastern section of the Mailu people in Orangerie Bay.

Four or five of the set dances had been given, and others were in full swing, and watchers were wondering when the *dauge* was coming into the village. In a few moments the conch shells were heard, and the crisp notes and song became distinct. As is customary in the *dauge*, the dancers were preceded by one man advancing in crouching manner, now turning to the village and now facing his fellows who were coming after him. Each of these was screened behind mats or plaited coconut leaves held by two other men.

I noticed on this occasion that the leading man had his

left hand full of spears, while he brandished a decorated one in his right in a diabolically threatening manner. I said to my friend, "There's going to be a row," and as they approached nearer he said to me, "If I had my revolver here I should be tempted to put a bullet into that fellow." All the followers of the *dauge* party were also armed, and just as they entered the village, without any warning, they raised that terrifying throaty yell, "*A aaaaa eeeeeeee i!*"

There was a great rustling of women's skirts as they scattered for the nearest houses; in a streak the *dauge* dancers and their followers had vanished from the village street and were defiantly shouting and yelling on the beach. We both ran down, to find that they were being faced by the Daui crowd. It is unnecessary to go into the whole proceedings. One of us at any rate was known to all there, and eventually the threat to write down the names of any who threw spears again and send them to the Government had the desired effect. It is wonderful what a power writing seems to possess in the native mind.

At one period in the fight the air was filled with one sort of weapon or another, but these were thrown at such a distance as to have very little serious effect. Some men were wounded and knocked down, and rushes were made to finish them off while they were down, but without result.

That night we spent on a big canoe on the beach between the two parties, and received deputations from each side throughout the night.

"It was only *leko*," they said. What struck me most forcibly about it was the row, the get-up, and the diabolical fury on the part of some. But every one seemed to wait for another to do the real thing. In a few moments men whom I had known for years as peaceful citizens seemed turned into the most ferocious of tigers; above the throaty yelling of the men could be heard the shrill nasal screeching of the women in the village.

The cause of the quarrel was that a Port Glasgow youth had gone to Gadaisu and taken away a Port Glasgow girl who had married at Gadaisu and been very badly treated by her husband; the girl's people had brought no pig to the feast for the Gadaisu husband, and a great fight was the result.

FINISHING TOUCHES.

Final Scraping of a pot before baking.

POT MAKING.

Coiling fillets of clay to form the pot, Mailu Island.

But *gara* (war) was another matter. It usually took the form of reprisal for some deliberate murder, or for a death supposed to be due to malignant magic practised by some other village. The psychological effect of a bad epidemic of disease, resulting in the loss of many lives, often accounted, I think, for some of the *garas*.

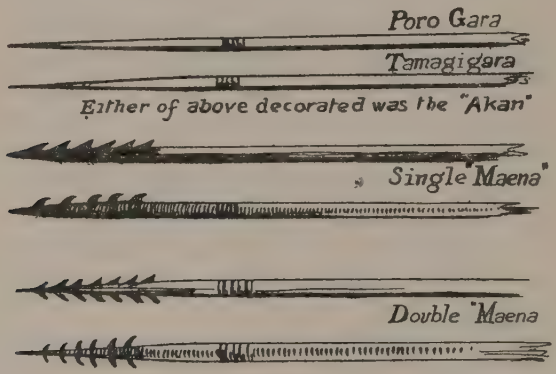
The *banaga* (fighting) *dubus* in the villages were generally the war *dubus*, and there is to-day in almost every community among the Mailu people a clan or sub-clan called *Banaga dubu*. To-day the Udama community inland have a men's house standing, and it stands in the *Banaga dubu* clan.

Their weapons were spears (*gara*) from twelve to sixteen feet long, made from black palm, and readily balanced in the hand. The head of the real Mailu fighting-spear was plain and pointed, but they also traded with Aroma for barbed spears and used them in their warfare. These spears all tapered away to a fine end; the hair of victims was often twisted in about a band of plaited string which encircled the spear about twelve inches from the point.

The spear was thrown by the hand, without any other means of propulsion, such as a piece of wood, to add impetus after leaving the hand.

The plain pointed spears were *gubina* (master) killing-spears. There were two forms of these, but wherein one differed from the other I cannot discover. One was called *poro-gara*, the other, *tamagi-gara*. Each of these was carried with another decorated spear called *akau*. The *akaus* were decorated along most of their length with red feathers, such as are used in the men's head-dresses for dancing, and with sun-bleached streamers. The *poro-gara* or the *tamagi-gara* was thrown first. The barbed spears were also carried and used, and were called after the two principal forms of barb. The lines of barbs were called *maena*, a name also given to that end of the barbed spear. The *maenas* were single or double, with the barbs straight or curved. The spears with a single line of barbs, still used in hunting, are called *mani-gara*, and the double-lined, *luri-gara*. According to their particular sub-clan individual owners named their spears after the name of their land, to which was attached the name of the fish-hawk (*amua*) and the shark (*baea*), the alligator (*uaea*), or the name of a hill.

These names following other words, similar throughout the tribe, formed the cry of defiance, as though the individual were bragging of the power of his arm as derived from the particular locality with its associated creature or hill. For example the family clan owning Goise, a piece of land on Goigoi Island, would call out, "*Nau kaina Goise-baea*"; another sub-clan in Bodeabo, "*Nau kaina Largo-amua*"; Banaga dubu, "*Nau kaina Baraudou amua*"; Loupomu Island, "*Nau kaina Lou-baea*"; the "Govi" sub-clan at Kurere, "*Nau kaina Avere-uaea*"; and one section of Maradubu, "*Nau kaina Agiuoro*," a hill on Mailu. "*Nau



SPEARS

Some interesting examples of spears and the native names applied to them

kaina," I am told, has no meaning beyond that of a savage threat. Another form, only used after the spear has gone home, is "*Aaa . . . goda-goda*," where every syllable is distinctly emphasized. To-day these expressions are continually heard from men fishing and in individual fights in the village.

Two forms of shield (*vesi*) were used. Those I have seen, both on the coast and inland, were almost square, with rounded corners, and had little decoration about them. They consisted of flat pieces of very light wood from the buttress of a tree called *dubuna*. A handle of twisted split cane was fixed on the back side and let through two holes. The size was generally two feet nine inches by two feet three inches. The second form, introduced from the Aroma, was more oblong, and when standing on the ground reached

almost to the man's chin, hiding practically the whole of his person. It was called *uri vesi*, and from the name, I judge, was a copy of the Aroma shield. It was decorated all over with nicely woven split cane. I have never seen one, nor do I think it was the original shape of the Mailu shield.

To give a more terrifying aspect to the warrior (and, I am tempted to suggest, to give him something other than his under lip to bite) each man had suspended round his neck, and hanging in front of his chest, the *toru*. I have seen only three different forms used and have heard of no other. The first (*kekemo*) consisted of a thin light piece of wood so cut out in pattern as to leave four almost complete squares at the corners, though the pattern slightly varied. The wood was covered with wax from the honeycomb and designs

KEKEMO BORAA MAA TORU

All three held in the teeth to add fierceness of aspect in warfare. *Boraa maa* and *toru* also used in *Daugi* dance

were worked out in bright red and black berries stuck on to the wax. Woven string on a short bit of wood was fastened to the bridge of the *kekemo* as a mouthpiece, and when the psychological moment had come and the warrior was making a mad rush for his enemy or defiantly facing him with poised spear, he held the mouthpiece firmly between the teeth. Another form of *toru* was the white saucer-like lip of a large shell (*toru*). They are used still in the *dauge* dance, just as they were in fighting days. Holes are drilled through one part of the rim to fasten the mouthpiece to the shell. This *toru* completely covered the mouth and chin of the wearer. The third form was made from two boar tusks firmly fastened together at their bases and bound with string for the mouthpiece. When in position the white tusks encircled the cheeks and eyes of the wearer. The necklace fastened to the mouthpiece of each form of *toru*

was made of two cords, on which were threaded flat round red and white discs of shell.

If the warrior had killed a man he was entitled to wear the white tail feathers of the hornbill (*bina*) at the end of the comb stuck in his hair. It was great presumption for any other man to wear this sign. If he had speared a woman he might wear the tail feathers of another bird, called *duro*, until the death of his elder brother, when he was permitted to wear his brother's hornbill feathers, or until he killed a man. Inherited ornaments for forehead and nose were donned with some of the made-up feather head-dresses. Streamers of sun-bleached leaves were tied tight round the ankles and wrists and just below the knee.

Hanging down his back by a cord from his neck he carried his bamboo knife (*bobomu bau*), twelve inches long, for decapitating his victim. For four inches this piece of bamboo remained intact, and was bound with string to form a handle. The cutting part of the knife consisted of half the bamboo circle, and after each decapitation a notch was made and a fresh strip split away, leaving a keen edge once more; the notches were practically a record of the number of heads the knife had cut off.

Such was the individual who stood in line with his fellows down the village street to receive the ceremonial sanction at the hands of the *gobu egi*. The *gobu egi* had very seriously fasted since he made the decision for a raid. In a single clan affair he alone gave the word to sharpen spear points, to get ready shields, in short, to prepare all the paraphernalia of war. In a community affair he acted in consultation with his fellows in other clans.

The *gobu egi* also fixed the day. His position was hereditary. After determining on a raid, and until peace once more reigned because they felt they had got satisfaction, he was under a strict tabu against certain kinds of food and also against relations with women. He could not visit the family houses. He was distinguished from all the others by being unshaven. At the "fall in" he came down from the *dubu* in the presence of the assembled community, and having ceremonially chewed the following things in the order mentioned, betel-nut (*ueni*), lime (*lele*), betel leaf (*arava*), cinnamon bark (*gobu*), he practised *amamani* (magic)—*i.e.*

laid a magic spell upon them by anointing them. He held in his hand a bunch of cane grass and uttered the spell upon it thus:

"*Ia Domara mida mai pelu la ae*,"
"I (a river) fish make to jump up,"
"*Ia Duramu mida mai pelu la ae*,"
"I (a river) fish make to jump up,"

and so on, mentioning in turn the rivers in the western part of the Mailu district, and the *mida* fish, whose habit is to jump up suddenly from the surface out of the river depths.

He then further chanted:

"*Ivivilosi, vailosi, modelosi.*"

This refers to lightning and thunder. At the end of this stanza, repeated again and again, all the warriors joined in with a deep melodious drawn-out "*Ooooo*" (pronounced as "awe") "*Iiiiii. . . .*" This last note was one of acquiescence, as though answering the query implied in the "*Ooooo*." As the high note "*Iiiiii*" stopped, the spears were beaten on the shields and then raised simultaneously and shaken, quivering from end to end in threatening fashion; this in imitation of the lightning. Then the men banged their shields against their knees to imitate thunder. Meanwhile the *gobu egi* waved his wand of anointed cane grass (*silowo*) upon them and their weapons.

The man whose relative had been killed in an earlier conflict, and who was now about to get the price of blood, was called the *gumu egi*. This man, though perhaps not the one actually to kill, had the honour of cutting off the head. The man who first struck home was called the *maimai egi* (killer), the next to thrust his spear into the victim was called the *lagu egi* (helper). The *gobu egi*, having first chewed a bit of cinnamon bark, held up the head and let a little of the blood run into his own mouth.

Mailu Island men went across to the mainland in their long double-paddling canoes (*bobore*), which were so deep that they had to stand up to paddle them. Arrived at the landing- or waiting-place, they concealed themselves by covering their bodies with leaves and mangrove branches.

They sent spies up the hill tracks, while others stood hidden on the sides of the path ; a dozen men stayed with the *bobore*, hidden in a mangrove patch. The unfortunate victims were generally caught as they came down in the early morning to fish or to plant. Having killed their man, or men, or women, they returned to the canoe, tied cord to the skull, or skulls, and swung them in taunting farewell to the village of their victims. They similarly waved their spears and shields and sang the Ororo song :

" *Maniniai apageno genomorua emainia Aaa . . . Eiiii . . . I.*"

I do not know the meaning of these words, they are in the Aroma dialect.

The light shining on their waving shields made the watching women on Mailu Island call out that they had seen the lightning on the shields. What took place on the return to Mailu is related in the chapter on " Initiation."

Papari, my old native friend and informant on all matters dealing with earlier days, gave me the following account of what he regards as the beginning of the fighting between Mailu and Laruoro.

A man called Apora, grandfather of the youth Gabura, now living, went to Delebai to get food. Coming back he and his mates called at Laruoro, stole a lot of nuts, and saw an old man lying on the beach alone and very ill. He was covered with sores. From other descriptions it must have been at the time of a smallpox epidemic. (Some of Gabura's uncles, whom I knew well, were terribly pock-marked.) They killed the old man and then set off for Mailu. A Laruoro man, standing hidden, had watched them, and called out when he saw the canoe going off: " Come back and take the man you have killed ! " Papari's father went to Laruoro and was asked which clan on Mailu had done this. He replied that it was Maradubu, and told them to come to Mailu the following morning for redress. They came, and also brought men from Loupomu.

They quarrelled, and ten Laruoro men retired secretly during the quarrel, and taking three small Mailu boys with them into the bush behind the village, murdered them and went off in their canoe. The mothers took the bodies, held them up and called out: "Take away those you have killed ! "

To pay them out Mailu men went in mass to Laruoro and anchored their canoes in the passage through the reef. When the reef became dry both parties donned their ornaments. Mailu went into the Laruoro bush and, when they emerged, found Laruoro, Loupomu and Dalava ready, defying them to throw the first spear. Mailu said they had come only for a fight (*verua*), as they were relatives. Four Mailu men were killed. The others came back and prepared for reprisals. After making plenty of sago they arranged a *Damorea* dance, and invited Laruoro to come. They came and watched the dancing all night. In the morning one of the chief men on Mailu got a bunch of betel-nut and called out the name of a chief man of Loupomu: "Here's your betel-nut!" With one hand offering the betel-nut Gaiwo ran forward, and with the other hand thrust Ueri through with a spear. Before the visitors could clear off three others were killed. Next morning Mailu got all their canoes ready, pulled up sail and cleared out for Aroma. Loupomu and Laruoro chased them in their canoes but could not catch them. Mailu got to Table Point and the others returned to Onibu Rocks. The next morning these collected all their confederates of Ouma, Dalava, Laua, Magori, to go overland and catch and kill the Mailu men, who were on their canoes moored in the two rivers, Oibo and Magaubo. Oraedo, Batu (Domara), in those days living at Dedele (Batu), and Gorume, all came to help Mailu, also one man from Ouma, who came and reported that the *gara* was coming, and told them not to sleep. Mailu replied by saying: "*Gadosae*" ("That's a good thing"). They covered their fires, stuck up their shields in the sand in rows, and waited behind them in the moonlight. The others approached with the usual throaty yell and their particular war-cries of defiance. A rapid exchange of spears followed. A Loupomu sorcerer was killed and the yelling, ferocious Mailu savages made an awful rush on the others, chased them back to Dalava, burned the village down, and massacred men, women and children. Then, pretending to go farther west, they returned home during the night, and next morning sailed across to Loupomu, encircled it, made a great massacre there and burned the village down. That night the whole Laruoro population

cleared out to Gadaisu, in Orangerie Bay. There they lived for many years, and some of them married there and remain to this day, half the village speaking Mailu and the other half Daui.

From Gadaisu the Laruoro men came along the beach to Ori to attack the Mailu warriors visiting there and lost eight of their old influential men. Ṭhus ended Papari's story of the biggest war in Mailu history. His father was correct when he said that the Laruoro and Mailu people were relatives; the whole affair was a calamitous business within a certain part of the tribe formerly friendly. When peace was restored half of Laruoro came back.

The true *gara* villages of the Mailu people—that is, their traditional bitter enemies—were those who lived on the hills when I first came here. Woworo and Delebai were friendly before, and even after, the incident mentioned above; but east of them the Maisi villages—Dagobo, Unevi and Borebo—the villages in Millport Harbour and Port Glasgow, and Magori, a hill-top village, a little in from the coast west of Mailu, had no truck with Mailuans.

The former hill-top people are despised even to-day, and no intermarriage takes place with them. It was among these people that the Mailu did their head-hunting.

I once came closely in contact with the true meaning of *gara*. Rather more than twenty years ago I arrived at Kurere village on an ordinary missionary visit, and was amazed to find that they were starting to erect a *gara gana* or *baoa* (stockade) round the village. The posts were about fifteen feet high. All the men were busy making and collecting spears and shields. They told me there was a very big *gara* in the bush from Magori and the kindred villages.

As I had already visited Magori on two previous occasions, and had found nothing but a kindly reception, I said we would go and see what the matter was. One sub-clan at Kurere was related by marriage to Magori. The atmosphere at Kurere was tense. It was therefore not surprising that when, just before sundown, a woman rushed into the village saying that a Woworo woman had seen one of the scouts (*paiva egi*) of the *gara*, in a marvellously short space of time every able-bodied man was out of his house armed with

Carving the Under Surface of House Flooring Planks.
Woman Making a Skirt from Coconut Leaves.

spears and extemporized shields; things were happening rather near home.

There was a rush to the river bank, where they seized everything in any way approaching the shape of a canoe and paddled off immediately, I on one, for Woworo up the river.

We interviewed the woman, who, we found, was unable to substantiate what she had said. She, like all the others, was suffering from nervous panic. I had been told that Magori had killed four men in the bush on the Tuesday. On Wednesday night, after coming back from Woworo, the men of Kurere said they would accompany me next day to Magori. When I got up on Thursday morning there was not a man in the village. They evidently had discovered overnight that their gardens, not far distant, suddenly needed attention. I walked the length of Table Bay that day and found the villages temporarily stockaded, with nobody in them except women, children, and a few old men.

At Magaubo, just round Table Point, there was not a soul in the village and, so far as I could judge, no one near. But we had been heard (I had a few of my young mission boys with me). A man in full war decoration came into the village, and as soon as he recognized us and removed his *toru* I recognized him as Maru. I must say I admired him and his get-up; he was an impressive spectacle. His *toru* was held between his teeth (purposely I suppose until he saw who we were) and made it quite impossible for us to identify him. He told us to wait where we were, and in a short time he returned with his wife and family and some others of the village who had been in hiding. We spent the night there, a very quiet one. Maru was there all night and gave us some of the facts of the case, but after the first streak of dawn was nowhere to be seen. He said that the bush was full of *gara*—a native *does* exaggerate a bit at such times—also that one of the four men killed was a young Dalava fellow, who a few months before had taken me through the big swamp at the back of Table Bay; another was a Deba man from the back of Magori.

That day we walked back the twenty-odd miles over the soft sand beach of the bay. At Kurere I got four of the sub-clan related to Magori to accompany me in on the

Sunday. These four men had previously expressed the wish to associate themselves with the mission, and this trip was a trial of their sincerity.

We chose to go the river (Bailebo) track, which meant crossing and recrossing all the time for a distance of five or six miles. We chose this track that they might see us from their hill and recognize who we were. When we came from the river to the track through the bush we sat down and wrung out our wet things.

The forest is glorious there, and that day it seemed more beautiful than ever. On the level, half-way through, one of my companions touched me on the shoulder and told me to look back. Sure enough we had passed a *paiva egi* (scout). We called out to him, telling him to guide us up into the village. All we heard was a rapid rustle of his feet on the undergrowth, and then a united call from a great number of men, but not the defiant guttural yell; it was followed by the tread of many running feet. This was evidently the ambush, the *gara*. The scout was adorned with *toru*, feathers, ankle and knee streamers, spears and shield, and I suppose his crowd of associates were similarly decked out. We continued our way, and after climbing for some distance the frightfully steep track up the hill, we saw a number of the houses, and women standing on every vantage spot to gaze down on those coming up. Their presence assured us it would be safe to proceed, and we called out to them to cook us food.

By the time we got to the top, and inside the strong stockade through its narrow doorway (*baoa noga*), not a woman or child could be seen. The men were sitting singly and in groups on the filthy rocks about the houses. (For really stinking villages commend me to these old hill-top places; they *are* built on the hill-top, and nothing but these rocks decorates the village street!) In nearly all such villages as Magori there is, or was, a second section on a higher spur, and it was this higher one that was usually the fighting section.

Poi was the higher of the two parts of Magori. This time, though, it was in the lower one that they were going to hold the celebration over the victims' skulls and hands and feet bones.

We, too, sat on rocks just inside the *baoa noga*. Nobody came to speak to us; no word was spoken by that crowd of men.

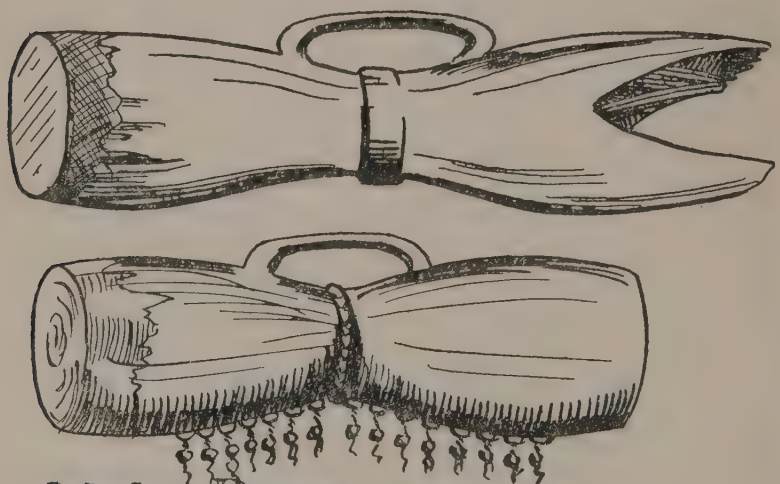
It was apparent that they had hastily taken off their war finery. There was no sign of spear, shield, feathers or *toru*; only the streamers on ankles and knees, and sticking in their hair the combs with hornbill tail feathers.

We repeated our request for food. Every eye we saw was fixed on us, and many more eyes than we could see. After a while we told them to go and tell Poi to come down. During the wait for them I moved off my rock, which was a hard one, to go over to the *dubu*, if only to sit on a bit of the wooden ladder for a change. Immediately there was a movement and one of my men, warned by a sign, ran across and pulled me from the *dubu*. We learned afterwards that the skulls and bones of the victims were hung up in that *dubu* being smoke-dried, ready for the morrow's ceremony.

The Poi people eventually came, and recognizing some of the older men I went and greeted them, told them it was Sunday—they knew what I meant—and that I was going to have a service. We had one—two hymns, two prayers and a short address. I never had before or since a more attentive audience, if fixed gaze meant anything. No one went to sleep!

Immediately after the service, women appeared with pots of food. We did justice to the *taro*. Voices were heard again in the street; the men came nearer. When we were going away, they gave us an escort. One man was so anxious to see us safely off the premises that he came a couple of miles with us. We asked him to show us the bush track, as we were sick of the river. There we found traps set everywhere—small roots pulled up slightly, loop fashion, to trip up any who might attempt to attack. In long grass patches hidden tufts were tied across the path for the same purpose; the thorny streamers of the cane-palm were tied across to catch the bushy hair of enemies. Sharp spikes of black palm had been placed along many of the tracks to pierce the feet or ankles of attacking or fleeing parties. I have been told that these spikes were often plunged into putrid flesh so as to poison any wound they made. But for other reasons it proved impossible to go on; as our guide said, the

continued dry weather had caused people to choose the river track, so that the bush track had become overgrown. We returned to the river, and there wished our guide good-bye. We hurried back to Kurere; he up again into Magori to celebrate the skulls and bones by the *moragoba*. He told my companions that the skulls and bones were in the *dubu* I had made for, and that on the following day they were to celebrate the *lua* dance and carry them in procession—as far as they could "process" round those rocks. Great piles of stones and rocks were placed ready on one side of the



Mailu Drums hollowed out from Moda logs & covered with lizard skin

village overlooking a precipice, at the bottom of which wound one of the village tracks. A Government punitive party, I heard, got the benefit of some of these a fortnight afterwards.

The cause of the trouble is never an easy thing to find out. There had been a long drought and undoubtedly Magori had lost some of their people, when sago-making and gardening, at the hands of a savage crowd of weedy, degenerate Kuviris from the back of Cloudy Bay, Baisebaga, Oio and Darava, known and dreaded always by Magori, Deba and Laua. These Kuviris, no longer blocked by the rivers, wandering about for food, and probably brooding over the

superstitious origin of the drought, had made the occasion one for murdering their enemies, the Magori. These retaliated on those apparently innocent, but doubtless were satisfied when they got blood for blood.

The warfare of the Mailu people against those of Maisi hill and Magori consisted of raids made in revenge for treacherous murders. The heads and limbs of the slain were brought back to Mailu to form part of the ritual of their social economics. I have never heard that in such a case of warfare as that against Laruoro and their confederate villages the heads of the slain were brought back as trophies. Probably that accounts for the taunt: "Carry off those you have killed."

CHAPTER XXII

Sickness & Death

Sickness—Suffering—The Medicine Man—Death

IN the chapters bearing on this and on allied subjects it is my intention to try to get at the native way of looking at sickness and death. This is never an easy task, and I think the best course will be to state the facts about the natives and examine their actions.

The ailments and diseases of our people are very similar to those to which all flesh is heir. Owing to the vigilance of an interested Government the natives have been spared many of those terrible epidemics so common in civilized countries. We have had measles, chicken-pox, whooping-cough, etc., but they have been stamped out before they could do extensive damage. A native with mumps is about the most ludicrous-looking object I have ever seen. Fortunately those who did not themselves have a great deal of suffering from the complaint were able to see in others the funny side—or sides—of the disease.

On the other hand, they have the diseases familiar in tropical countries. These are bred and fostered in the humid hot-house atmosphere of all the country, and particularly in its swamps, forests and rank grass plains. The natives suffer seriously from malaria, and sweat it out by a sun or fire cure. At night, in their houses, blankets and mosquito nets of smoke protect them from a lot of mosquito bites. I think, too, that experience has taught them to avoid making villages in mosquito-infested places. They have a horror of the mosquito, which gives their bare bodies no rest.

For attendant headache or for painful swellings such as are caused by rheumatism they resort to bleeding, by cutting the aching part with flakes of obsidian, and also tie the part tightly with string or cane.

External ailments, ulcers, sores, skin diseases, etc., are taken more or less philosophically and generally very patiently; but anyone laid aside for long periods does a

lot of philosophizing, and puts in his say on every possible occasion and subject, as though to make up for bodily incapacity. But it is a marvel to me how, in isolated villages away from European aid, they bear the awful suffering from some of these ulcerating sores. In many cases these persist year after year, until if the limb recovers at all it becomes permanently misshapen or stiffened.

But the native *sees* these things and generally knows the origin, such as a cut not attended to, or persistence in going into the sea, for in Papua that immediately sets up suppuration. He puts them down to no superstitious origin until continued growth and pain cause him to forget the real cause and superstition awakes. The natives make a plaster (*watoro*) by scraping the berry of a tree-fern, and stick it on the ulcer. They have great faith in this cure! A body ringworm is prevalent in some parts of this district in some communities; one in every three or four has it. If not taken in time it spreads over the body until the skin becomes permanently covered all over. Many of the people regard it as a matter of course, but it is generally much disliked, and apparently retards both physical and mental growth.

Accidents are remarkably few, and occur mostly while fishing. A little time ago two youths came to me, one with the skin torn right back from his wrist and the back of his hand, and the other with a piece bitten out of his throat, by sharks. Alligators also attack the natives when fishing in the rivers. As a rule, the Mailu native is extremely afraid of bodily injury, and this fact often makes him a very timid man.

They fear few diseases as they do vomiting, and the "anxious expression" of the medical books is a marked symptom in all cases of any derangement of the natural functions. Chest troubles are the most frequent ailments. After travelling about by day, sweltering in the sun on their canoes, or sweating in the gardens on the mainland at evening, they sit out in the cold land breeze coming down from the high mountains. Pleurisy and pneumonia are common; the difficulty of breathing in both cases and the stabbing pain in pleurisy are always superstitiously regarded as the work of *Karaveni*, a female sorceress of the east—she possesses the power of throwing stones into the bodies of

persons and of extracting their livers—together with all those of *barau*, the local sorcerer. Sufferers from these complaints in some instances will confess to having broken some tabu or *gora* (law), or trespassed on forbidden land, or eaten forbidden nut or fruit, and will send at once for the medicine man (*vara egi*).

The following account of medical attendance upon a man was recently given me by one of my sorcerer friends, Waru, who himself died only a week ago, after a fortnight's terrible suffering from complete obstruction of the bowel. A *karaveni* brought it about while he was making sago, by thrusting a big stone into his intestines and so causing stoppage! But Waru was a medicine man as well—indeed I have grave suspicions that nearly every medicine man is a sorcerer. Anyway Waru said that he was taught his medical spell by his father in his house when they two only were there. Waru's father, in turn, had learned it from his father. He was told to fast from octopus, the snail of the great clam shell, *orisa* and *iave* (two fishes), lest his body should come out in sores. Nor was he to eat food from any pot in which at any time these had been cooked. His father said to Waru: "If a man gets sick, you practise healing and make him well." His father took him to see sick men, as a sort of medical student! The father bit off a little cinnamon bark (*gobu*) and gave it to his son also to bite off a bit. They both chewed it and, after uttering the spell his father taught him, spat out the saliva on to the seat of pain. The spell was: "*Doeamua, Oriamua, Guniamua, Daugeamua, Otepaamua, Vereamua, atana bau, uau bau, lekeleke, apuobana duagabina, Niari gabina boidona, leluapuri, Maneadau, Oiladau, Otaudau, legelege gidagileke soisoi iarere mogabi tebi!*"

Though the meaning of some words is entirely lost, I give this spell here exactly as given to me, because of the ending, *amua*, attached to the names of localities, positions, chiefs (*Vere*) and the inland dance (*dauge*). *Amua* is the name of the bird of the Mailu people, and it is also suffixed to the ancestral names of the ceremonial fishing-nets (*gauma*).

After that digression we return to the sick-chamber. Waru told me that he used certain leaves, as taught him by his father; he would not mention their names, but pointed

A Mountain Village.

The club house in the foreground is dismantled for repairs.

them out growing near my window. After heating the leaves and uttering the spell over them he spread them over the seat of pain and massaged over the leaves. If pain came on again, a second visit was paid and the treatment repeated. In other cases where the patient suffered great pain, Waru said that his father took small stones from his string bag and put them in his mouth; after he had chewed some betel-nut and pepper leaf he uttered the spell, spat on the seat of pain and took the stones in his hand, saying to the sufferer, "These stones are the cause of your body pain," and the patient replied, "Yes, true, my body now feels lighter and easier"! I imagine this was a psychological cure. Waru also told me that in cases of fever his father used to take a water-bottle containing water and, after the usual spell and anointing over the mouth of the bottle, he poured a little of the water over the sick man. For doing these things Waru's father, and of course Waru himself, used to receive armshells, feathers, spears or fish. I do not doubt for a moment that, when Waru became ill, he took care to send for a *vara* man as well as myself. The unfortunate thing about it was that neither of us could extract the stone or give relief, nor would he go a hundred miles to get proper medical attendance. Anyway he was one of the nicest patients I have ever tried to do anything for.

Our people associate all the more complicated ills of the flesh with an occult power possessed by certain individuals, and on that account fly for assistance to those who possess the power of counteracting the evil.

Until very ill indeed, sufferers are left pretty much alone by their relatives and others—not for want of sympathy, and not only because of their ignorance and consequent inability to help, but because native sufferers resent being disturbed, and especially being awakened. In the native view it is dangerous to wake anyone from sleep, even when he is well. When asleep the *iau* (shadow) leaves the body and goes to the land of the shades of the departed (*Biula*), and it would be death for the man who was awakened before the shadow or spirit had time to come back to the body.

Persons suffering from high fevers sit out in the wind, or the sea or stream, or cold land breeze, and continue to

do so until exhaustion and weakness compel them to go back to the house.

Mothers are the most patient nurses, even more so than wives. But wives nurse their husbands carefully, and when extreme weakness does not permit of the patient leaving the house at all, the mother or wife, generally the mother, if still alive, will perform those offices which are needful. This is made easier by the erection of small shelters on the beach near the sick-house, in which they live and are nursed until better, or until the case is hopeless. The only nourishment which those suffering from serious illness will take is the water or milk of very young coconuts heated in the shell over the fire. I have known them to live for two or more weeks on this only. An epidemic of dysentery, nowadays happily much less frequent, is a distressing and hopeless misery; they have no hygienic conveniences of any description except the sea, and in the early stages of the disease the sufferers, entirely regardless of endangering others, spread the germs everywhere. Further, until quite recently, the body was brought into the house to be wept and wailed over after death, and this happens even now in some cases.

A sufferer from a wasting disease such as consumption goes about his ordinary occupations; but, going one day to the pool for a drink, fails to see his reflection (*iau*) in the water, and with fear and disquiet begins to muse over the calamity. Should he again fail to see his reflection upon a subsequent visit to the pool, he goes back to the village to consult the *vara* man. He asks the *vara* man: "Have you seen my reflection anywhere?" The latter replies: "Yes, I am seeing it all the time." Thereafter he pays the sick man a professional call. After uttering a spell over the water-bottle, he pours out the water into a wooden bowl, and seeks for a reflection in it; should he see only one reflection, he tells the sick man that he has found it, and that he will live; should he see two or three different reflections, he will say, "There is one other" or "two others," and will declare whose they are. If one of these is the reflection of the sick man's deceased relative he is told he will die, and if the reflection is that of another man alive in the village, this second individual will surely sicken and die.

The *vara* man covers up the water in the bowl in case any other man should see his reflection in it.

If with these facts readers will take others which I set out later as to the danger to a man of seeing his reflection in certain pools, or the ghost of a person living, or of letting certain shadows fall upon himself, they will be able to form a further idea of how these people are enmeshed in superstitious fear.[1]

When a person is about to die, the *vara* man is sent for (probably when some relatives are away) to tie the patient. After uttering a spell and using gentle massage he fastens round the patient a cord or strip of cane, not in hope of recovery but to retard death until the absent relatives return. They call this attempt to retard death *nena badibadi* (breath-tying), and it is regarded as tying the soul of the man to his body. People have come to me and told me that so-and-so is sitting tied—really propped up in the arms of someone—that his soul may not leave his body yet. This is not to be confused with the tying of string or cane to relieve pain.

In some cases the *vara* man, surely in this a sort of priest, after having tied the soul to the body, goes through the custom of clearing the eyes (*ini auraro*). This means clearing the priest's eyes, so that he can see the sick man's deceased relatives who are trying to get him away. He puts his hands over his face and, having pronounced a spell, pulls them down over his eyes, squeezes his head, cracks the joints of his fingers and says that he sees waiting there the spirits of the sick man's father or brother. The watchers over the dying man then address the spirits audibly, saying: "Go away! Don't call him; leave him alone!"

If, because he lives in a distant village, a near relative cannot be present at the weeping over the body, he will not visit the village of the deceased for two or three years, and should his relatives visit him, he will probably take no notice of them. The village where his relative died is *sora* (fast) to him; and he will fast (*sora*) for that length of time from such things as he used to receive from the deceased. This *sora* is eventually finished when, on a subsequent visit to the deceased's village, he is offered once more the same food as formerly and accepts it. It is then whispered

abroad that "he has eaten (*va isaea*)." The fast is entirely self-imposed, and that not only out of grief, but from fear of ill-luck, because he was absent from the wailing. In the daytime the natives apprise relatives in other villages of death by lighting smouldering wood fires in prominent places and in the late evening and night by waving flaming torches up and down.

In the case of recovery from a state of coma, which the native calls death (*bau egena*), he thinks that the soul comes back because it is chased back by ancestral spirits. But I must not anticipate what the native has to say about the soul and its connection with the body.

The sickness and death of very young children and of the aged are not attributed to superstitious causes.

As I was once approaching a village in Port Glasgow I saw on the beach a man decorated with all his ornaments and brandishing a spear in a frightfully realistic manner. When we got near we observed that he was going from side to side of a house, and each time he came to the end of his short beat, in a loud and threatening voice he addressed something or someone unseen, stamped his foot on the sand and poised that ugly long spear. For one unaccustomed to such things the appearance and behaviour of this thoroughbred savage would have been alarming in the extreme. A man within the house was dying, and the blood-curdling threatenings and harangues outside were being addressed to the sorcerer or sorceress who had caused the trouble. The priest outside was trying to do his bit to prevent them from coming to complete their anti-social work. I never saw such terrifying earnestness as that medicine man or priest showed that day.

When the watchers see the first signs of approaching death, all the relatives are summoned to the house. As a rule they wait quietly till the end. Among the Maisi section of Mailu, when a man feels death is near, he throws off his perineal cord, and the community is warned that he has done so, in case any female relative might approach the sick chamber unawares. If a patient is conscious just before death, food is offered him—sometimes he himself asks for it—which is called food for the journey (*ariari saba*). The last stertorous breathing, or struggle for breath, is called

aiaigave, the struggling of the soul to leave the body. During the passing the whole village remains quiet.

If serious sickness occurs away from home, every effort is made to bring the patient back to his own village; and if anyone dies away from his own village, the body is brought back if possible, that mortuary rites may be properly carried out. When death has taken place at a great distance, necessitating burial elsewhere, every effort is made to obtain relics, such as hair; and in the house of the deceased they wail for the dead at intervals for many days.

The other night we heard wailing and calling at sea—a canoe was approaching the village. When the people heard it they rushed to the beach and shouted to know the cause of the wailing. Learning that so-and-so was dead, the near relatives, male and female, laid hold of the handiest axes or heavy lumps of wood they could find, waded out over the shallow water on the reef to the canoe, savagely attacked and smashed its two front *birisas* and tore away the lashings. This act is known as *goba*, and is regularly done where a canoe is bringing home the dead body of its late owner. Kapu died suddenly of apoplexy when away making sago. I cannot better describe wailing and mortuary rites than by taking such a case as his, but I must do it in the next chapter.

NOTE

[1] See p. 285f.

CHAPTER XXIII

Burial & Mourning

Wailing for the Dead—Mortuary Ceremonies—Divination—Burial—Calling back the Soul—Vigil at the Grave—Ceremonies & Dress—The Mortuary Hut—Tabus—Widows & Widowers

KAPU'S body remained on the canoe all night, and till the early morning was caressed and wailed over without ceasing. The grief was terribly real. Short-lived, you may feel inclined to say. Yes, perhaps, in its intensity; a kind providence has cared for primitive man in that regard; but I will never be persuaded that all their grief is short-lived. They perform the wailing in a certain order. Above the low droning chant the several parties call out in pretty much the following order, each being followed by the whole body in chorus. The widow calls out: "Oh, my husband, my husband!" If the mother of the deceased is alive, her wailing takes its place as near the widow's as possible, and sometimes before it. The children follow with: "Oh, my father, my father!" as in the case of the widow, and repeat it over and over again. The elder brother calls out: "Oh, my young brother!" and the younger brother: "Oh, my elder brother!" The call of sisters' children is: "Oh, my mother, my mother!"—to help the grief of the deceased's sisters. Uncles and aunts call out: "Oh, my child, my child!" Grandchildren call out: "Oh, my grandfather!" The brothers of the widow, each in turn: "We two" (*guna*=dual) "our husband," thus emphasizing the fact that the common grief had made each brother widow in grief with the widow herself. Common native decency and etiquette prevent the sisters of the widow using the dual form, and to help her crying they wail: "Your husband, oh, your husband!"

After the calls of the nearest relatives, the deceased's *isigoina* calls out: "Oh, my companion . . ." In the present case he had been best man at Kapu's wedding, and

had shared his travails, hunger, fasts, travels, labour, dances —all that went to make up the life of Kapu. To help this last crying the others called out: "Your companion, your own companion. . . ."

It is a terribly moving thing, this wailing. I fly from it whenever I can. In ordinary deaths, when the relatives are assembled ready, the wailing starts immediately after the ceasing of the last soft long breath (*rodaroda*) which follows the soul's struggles to leave the body (*aiaigave*).

Besides these calls in the wailing, deceased relatives are also summoned to join in the grief, or to come and witness it.

In the morning relatives carried Kapu's body from the canoe and placed it on the lower platform of his house. Wailing was continued again for an hour, under the deceased's own roof. The widow sat at the head, which she nursed in her lap; as they wailed they leant over the body and caressed the limbs.

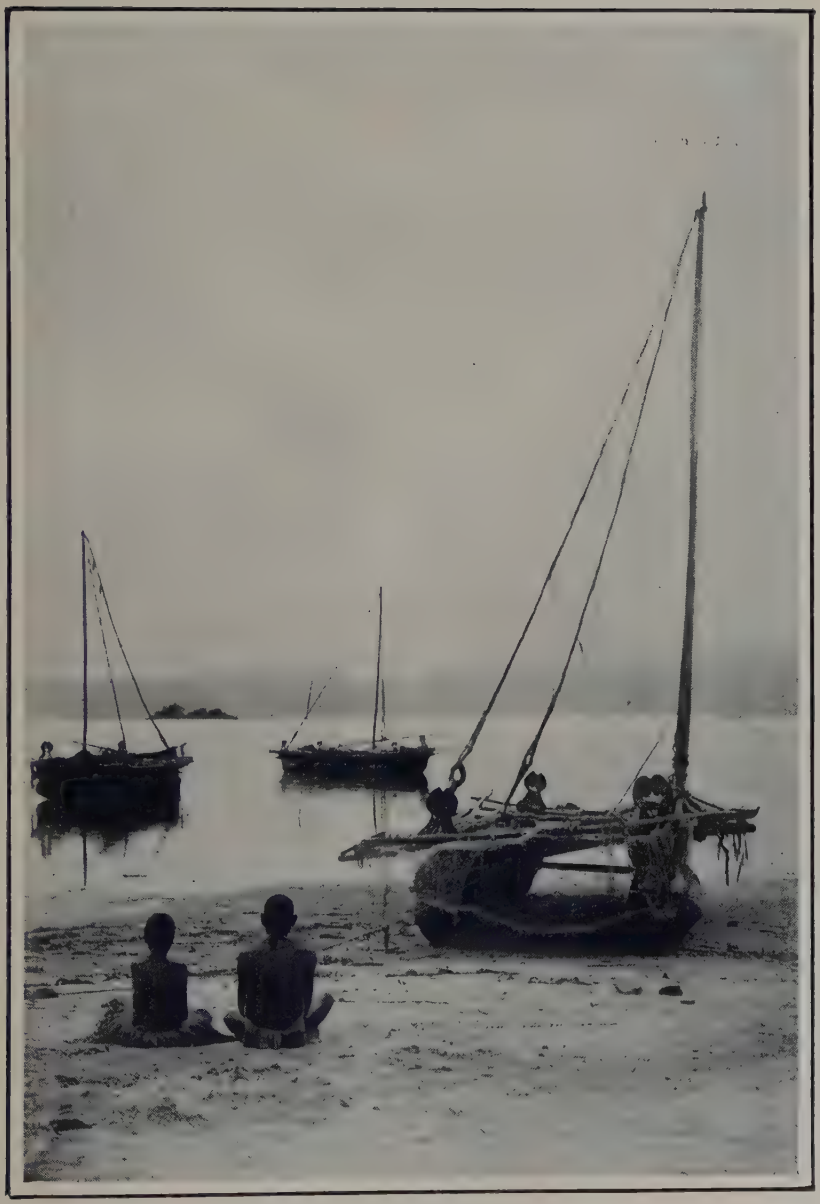
Some of the wailers scratched themselves with flakes of obsidian and sharpened shell. Meanwhile the brothers-in-law got ready two planks and laid them in the street. Near together at one end they thrust two short upright posts into the ground, and rested against them a short wide board on its edge. The deceased's sleeping-mat was thrown over this and other mats spread on the planks. His body was brought from the house and seated on the planks, with the neck resting on the upper edge of the transverse board. This was done with great renewal of wailing. The body was then prepared as for a dance: washed with fresh water and scraped coconut, and anointed with coconut oil; the eyebrows and upper forehead, with any hair about the face, were shaved off with flakes of obsidian (*nadi*); black lines (*umu*) were drawn under the eyes across the cheeks, and the hair teased out. They fastened round his forehead a decoration made of pieces of shell sewn on to a piece of coconut fibre (*oba munu*), his head-dress of beautiful feathers was brought out and set on as carefully as ever, the usual long bunches of cassowary feathers were stuck in his armlets, the black ceremonial plaited strings (*kuibi*) were wound round his waist, and the ceremonial perineal band of beaten bark adjusted by male relatives. His deceased father's white cowrie shells were tied to each elbow, and the circular shell

ornament (*kadei*) suspended from the septum of the nose. Two short lengths of bamboo were inserted into the lobe hole of each ear and cuscus fur streamers thrust into them and allowed to hang down. As they completed the preparation for the sitting-in-state a wild expression of grief burst from the onlookers as well as from the relatives. The widow had never left the side of her husband., The verandahs of all the houses in the immediate vicinity were crowded with people, who joined in the chorus of wailing. Meanwhile the deceased's brother-in-law prepared another plank (often they use an old canoe rudder), and after making four or five holes at intervals along each edge tied two long poles to the edges, leaving the long ends of binding material to hang loose. They covered this plank with a mat, on which they laid other mats and plaited coconut leaves, to be the final trappings. Women's skirts were cut up and adjusted at one end of the plank as the pillow. The plank was placed on the ground alongside the deceased, and after sufficient time had been given for the wailing, they removed the ornaments reluctantly, lifted the body from its sitting position, all the time with women screaming and holding on to the limbs, laid it out on the plank, wrapped it in the mats and tied all together.

Three or four male friends ranged themselves on each side of the bier, which they gently raised from the ground by the loose strands. A priest, one of the *vara* men, on such an occasion called *kururu egi* (whisper man), solemnly approached the head of the bier and, after the usual chewing, opened a bit of the matting near the head and whispered the following spell into the opening:

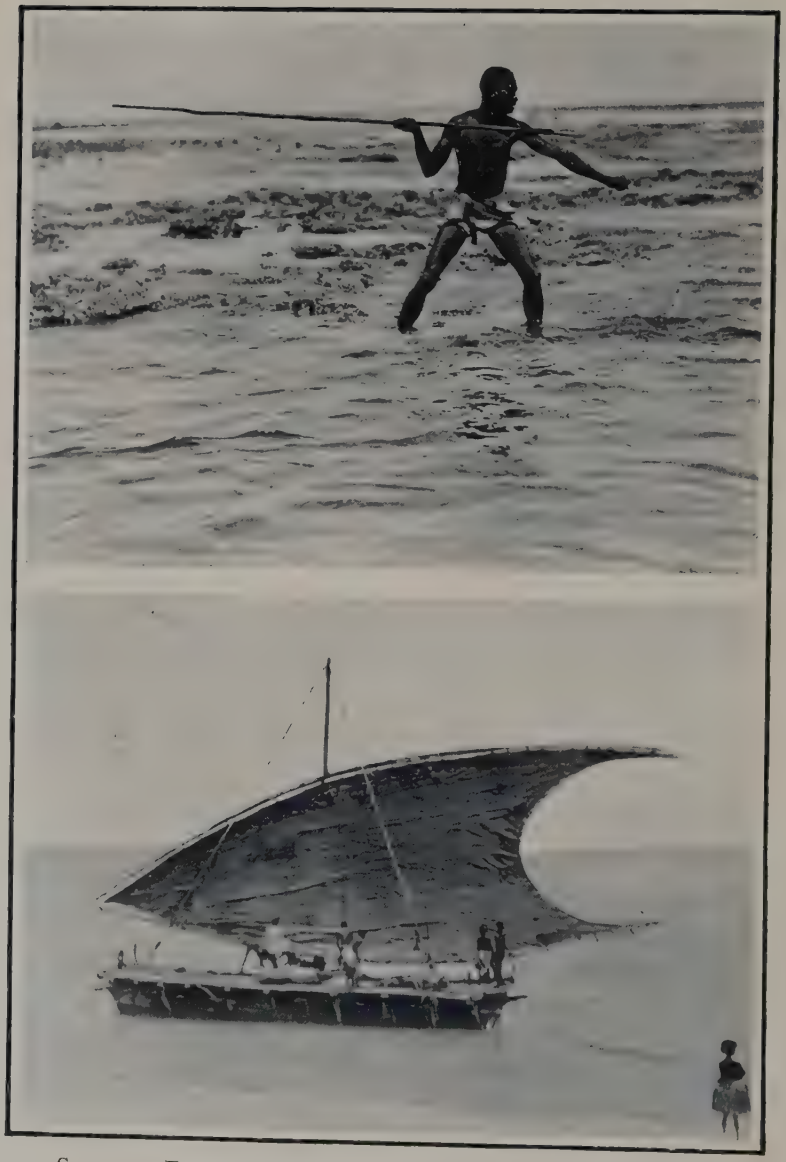
> " *Boi kururuisausamu agasiba ! opaopa da seiba !* "
> " Soul I whisper thee move thou deceive do not ! "

This he repeated twice, and then spat into the opening, raised his foot, similarly anointed the sole and gently kicked or pushed the bier with it. Going to the foot of the bier he repeated this ceremony, then left the bier and called for the diviner (*osiosi egi*). The diviner must be one of the elders of the village who has been master of a feast or feasts, and is accustomed to fast from certain kinds of fish. On a verandah near by he solemnly chewed betel-nut while he waited for complete silence; then he addressed the dead in



PAPUAN BOATS.

The end on view of the sailing canoe on the beach will give a good idea of the relative positions of dug-out and outrigger, also of the stepping of the mast and rigging.



Spearing Fish on the edge of the Reef, Mailu Island.

Hoisting the "Crab Claw" Sail.

Those hauling on the main halliards are behind the sail. Those in front are helping to relieve the weight by raising the boom. When hoisting the sail the mast is always to leeward so that the rigging can take the strain.

a loud voice. The address and questions put vary according to the manner and place of death. Kapu's body was addressed as follows:—

"*Gani marai Lea de baesagasa o? baesagasa o?*"
"Your sickness met you at Lea, met you? met you?"
(The bier did not move)

"*Bautu ausu ma idauleminiga? nede maiga o?*" (Repeated)
"Smoke in met you? There killed you?"
(The bier did not move)

"*Burau ma nede maiga o?*" (Repeated)
"Burau there killed you?"
(The bier did not move)

"*Da nena de o?*" (Repeated)
"Not there eh?" (The bier did not move)

"*Ena ini omu nede ibilaesa o?*" (Repeated)
"Does something of his remain unpaid for?"
(The bier did not move)

"*Abai ena bau ena goruna de, abai ena bau abuabu ena goruna ma duusiainaga?*"
"From the same cause as your father's predecease,
The cause of your father's predecease pierced you?"
(Movement)

"*Ne siwowa ei ma bua o?*"
"By the same ginger root" (Repeated again and again)
(Movement)

"*Banaoro ma duusiainaga o?* (Repeated) *Ana siwowa omu bua?*"
"Banaoro (village) pierced you? The same ginger?"
(Movement)

"*Opaopa da agasiba, egena riba bua agasiba*" (Repeated)
"Don't deceive in movement, move only for correct speech."
(Movement)

"*Goiseamua gana ari, vaasipa la noa guduisa o?*"
"Shall *Goiseamua*" (name of deceased's canoe) "go down that your grave may be scented?"—*i.e.* shall they go in his canoe to get fish that the smell of fish may be on his grave, thus securing his continued good will.
(Movement)

"*Batuamua guduisa o?*" (Repeated)
"Shall *Batuamua*" (deceased's ceremonial fishing-net) "go down?" (Movement)

"*Gana nabu Api ma imaimalaga de, ena gauma Goiseamua guduisa o?*"
"Because your younger brother prepared you for burial shall he go with his net on *Goiseamua*?" (Movement)

"*Logoamua guduisa ma mai aisa o? Gana ooeva eo, eva nanama torea eo wosi eidema, gama gauma gubina guduisa o?*" (Repeated)
"Shall *Logoamua*" (Kapu's net) "go and get fish, will you come? because your children and these female mourners are hungry, shall your own net go?" (Movement)

Questions one to nine refer to the cause of death and the place that practised the sorcery. Lea is the name of the sago locality. Burau is the name of a sorcerer at Magori, one of the hereditary enemy villages. *Siwowa* is the name of wild ginger, always bitten and chewed by the sorcerer. Banaoro is the name of a village in Port Glasgow dreaded by the Mailu people for its practice of sorcery.

Questions ten to thirteen are requests for help from deceased's spirit, for permission to use his net and canoe without incurring the risk of ill luck.

The *osiosi egi*, still addressing the corpse, asks in the following manner where he would like to be buried:—

"*Ane, gana lara Duamu la danisa o?*" (Repeated)
"Will you go in to your land Duamu?" (No movement)

"*Ane, gana lara bo la, gana susuba dou la: Oroobo la danisa o?*" (Repeated)
"How about your true land, under your plantation shade: Will you go to Oroobo?" (Movement)

"*Gana abai ena varo la, nede uiloiseava, Oroobo la danisa o?*"
"Will you go to your father? Will you two lie there together? Will you go in to Oroobo?" (Movement)

When there is movement the whole bier sways from side to side.

The *osiosi egi*, then addressing the people, says, "Carry away!" and four or more friends shoulder, as far from the corpse as possible, the poles attached to the bier and take it to the desired burial ground, where the grave is dug.

Kapu's bier was laid down by the side of the grave, the trappings were untied, the mats opened up again, and great wailing and caressing took place.

They spread plaited coconut leaves (*sinau*) at the bottom of the grave, with a mat and pillow (women's skirts), and, when ready, let the corpse down and shielded it with more plaited coconut-leaf. Then they covered all with earth and put a plank on top.

The chief mourners remained at the grave till the evening and then returned to the village. Thus ends what is known as the *Kisa iaia samu* (bone-aching day).

The chief mourners are the widow, and mother if alive; the deceased's sisters (*torea*) and female cousins (*nai torea*). With others who come willingly, these last two groups form the *nanama torea*. More distant kin also take part in the mourning ceremonies as assistant mourners, but not for the same length of time or with the same marked observances.

On occasions of special grief, such as the death of a man of some note (hereditarily), a peculiar custom is performed on the day after burial with a view to try to lessen the grief. The chief actors are two married women, unrelated to the deceased or to his chief mourners. It is whispered about that it is to take place, so that morning, instead of starting out at once to keep their vigil at the grave, the chief female mourners remain in the upper part of the house.

The two women (*borere avesa* = fun women), whom I choose to call "The Follies," go off early into the bush and, decorating themselves with leaves and flowers, come back to the village with midribs of coconut leaves in their hands. They get drums from their houses, go to the house of the deceased and beat the verandah, calling out: "What are you sleeping for?" Beating the drums they start dancing, in which numbers of other women join, having hastily decorated themselves and got their drums. They dance the

dance that the deceased was accustomed to lead. Then they mimic the giving of pigs and food, laying hold of any *empty* pots that they see and carrying them from house to house, offering food to any whom they may meet. They then call upon the *nanama* to come down; some do so, as far as the lower platform; the widow and one of her helpers remain above. "The Follies" have collected numbers of water-bottles from different houses and placed them on the lower platform. Then, to get the widow down, they take a couple of drums and beat time to a song. In the case of Kapu's death the two women sang:

"*Doae aieni o, ai e ni o.*"
"Oh, widow come, oh, come."

"*Gana odei maimai Wari auriesa.*"
"Wari remains to make your sago."

"*Doae aieni o, ai e ni o.*"
"Oh, widow come, oh, come."

The widow, however, does not come down until "The Follies" have mentioned the names of all the deceased's younger brothers.

"*Gana orebe maimai. Boboni auriesa.*"
"Your fish to catch Boboni remains."

"*Doae aieni o, ai . . . e . . . ni o*" (long drawn out).
"Oh, widow come, oh, come."

Now the widow stands ready at the top of the ladder,

"*Gana madava seisei Godana auriesa.*"
"Your garden to make Godana remains."

"*Doae aieni o, ai e ni oo.*"
"Widow oh, come, oh, come."

The widow comes down and with her the one or more women who help her. The folly is performed to try to cheer everybody up. The widow descends completely covered up with skirts and mats. So also the *nanama torea*, but these remove the mats from their heads from time to time. The female mourning party all go and sit down on the ground under the house, most of them covered up.

"The Follies," with other women, jump up on the plat-

form, while the mourners are surrounded by a crowd of women carrying baskets. Those on the verandah take the numerous water-bottles in their hands, while others sing another song accompanied by quick beats on the drums. The song is called the "water-bottle throwing-down song" (*aama paeapaea mádi*):

"*Dia borere o maigenea borere ati o maigenea,*
E, iaoa . . . ai . . . iaoa . . . oooo. . . ."

"What folly shall we make? Let us make folly."

The second line is the calling upon all to throw together. At the end of the last crisp "o" they throw down the bottles together into the baskets, which they divide up among the women present, in mimicry of the divisions at a feast.

I cannot help thinking that the performance is an attempt to call to mind in the midst of grief the future feasts, dances and celebrations in the village which the occurrence of a death does occasion eventually.

After this fooling was finished, everybody separated and the chief mourners repaired to the grave. That day a distribution was made to the whole village, according to *dubus*, of the mature coconuts of the deceased—the first of many such distributions, as will be seen later. For the next three weeks or a month the chief mourners, especially the women, keep their vigil at the grave. They form up into an awesome procession every morning and return to the village in the same order in the evening. The male mourners do not walk in the procession. I notice that at the decease of a man the women mourners are more in evidence, and at the death of a woman the men mourners. They cook and eat all their food at the grave. If the weather is bad they make a lean-to shelter. The scrub and undergrowth near the grave is cleared away at once and the ground in the vicinity kept swept. There they make all the mourning ornaments and weeds, shave their entire heads and blacken their bodies from head to foot with charcoal. They do not bathe or go fishing or gardening for a month. The women occupy themselves in making new skirts, long, trailing on the ground, and entirely untrimmed. The pointed end of the leaf is dependent instead of woven in the waistband as with an ordinary skirt. Upon their legs and thighs hundreds of

yards of fine string are twisted (*aniani*) by hand, and when sufficient is made it is worn from each shoulder to the opposite side, coming between and almost covering the breasts. This is called *lavara*, and is made and worn by the widow and the deceased's own sisters.

The heads are shaved with flakes of obsidian, this in memory of the head of the deceased (*mòru sipo* = price of head). The eyebrows are also shaved off in memory of the deceased's eyebrows. The shaving is done once only, and any hair that subsequently grows is allowed to remain until the day when they throw off and burn the signs of mourning (*magu*). All normal armlets are removed and in place of them rough untrimmed strings from a vine stalk are tied round the wrists and arms and ankles, in memory of those parts of the deceased's body. Subsequently widows' or widowers' armlets are made from cane, very wide, and worn permanently. Bits of string are tied through the small holes round the rims of the ears, in memory of ear ornaments worn by the deceased (*ope gege magu*). White seeds threaded on four strings as a loop are hung from the lobes of the ears, in memory of the pierced lobes of the deceased. Strong cord is made from pandanus fibre and worn round the neck, and from it, when I first knew the people, was suspended some relic, such as a bone or hair of the dead man, or one of his old armlets or some favourite ornament. I have even seen part, or the whole, of a deceased son's perineal cord suspended from a mother's neck in memory of her son. Nowadays bone relics are not generally worn or carried. Formerly one of the cervical vertebræ was always woven into the *lavara* of the widow and of each of the blood sisters (*lala torea*), and suspended at the side. Until the widow and chief female mourners have completed their weeds, skirts are worn over the shoulders as well as from the waist, and often over the head, when in procession or at the grave. The deceased's water-bottle (empty) is placed in position over his breast, and by the side of the grave a young coconut containing coconut water, but this water is drunk by the mourners before leaving the grave in the evening. Similarly in some cases fish and food are placed upon the grave, but eaten by mourners before going back to the village.

Three or four days after the burial eight or ten young men, led generally by the deceased's *isigoina*, remain behind when the mourners have left for the village. They go off into the bush near one of the pieces of land owned by the deceased to call his spirit back to the village to help them. While the others go into hiding, each behind some tree or hidden in a bush, the *isigoina* or a relative calls out to the dead man's spirit:

"*E, gea odei la ariasa de, aiba ne!*"
"Eh, we sago to are about to sail come!"

All those in hiding put their hands to their ears to help them hear the reply.

"*E, Uri la ariasa de boraa mai la oniasa de, aieniba ne ariari dema ne.*"
"Eh, Uri to we are about to sail to get pigs about to go, come because we are sailing."

"*E, isigoina o, gea Uri la ariari dema ne boraa mai la aiba ne.*"
"Eh, oh companion we Uri to are sailing to get that pig come!"

This is called out in a loud voice, and those in hiding strain their ears and hear an "O" (*aw*), and whisper to one another that it is the voice of an old spirit. So they give up that spot, and go off to another piece of the deceased's land, and the same calls are made until they hear a feeble "*oooooo*" in response, and they exclaim "*E, vaina de*" ("He has come"). They run to the path and stand in line on either side, then two of them rush off to the village to help the spirit to find its way correctly to his old house. They have to run quickly, for the spirit runs and jumps! The remaining eight men follow at leisure.

Nearly all the foregoing ceremonies are still practised at every death. If the body is much wasted by disease and emaciated, the sitting-in-state is left out, but the *waga* ceremony (divination), to find the cause and place of death, and to implore assistance, is rarely omitted, except at the funerals of little children.

A small mortuary hut or shelter to protect the deceased from weather used always to be erected over the grave, and

eventually, after all but the chief mourners had thrown off mourning at the mortuary feast, this hut was burned down.

During the vigil at the grave (*ari*), when frequently there are periods of silence, and thoughts are undisturbed, the sudden rustling of a leaf in the breeze, the buzz of a small insect, or even, I am told, the sound of the white ant beginning his destructive work on the wood of the mortuary hut, is said by the mourners to be the sound of the spirit of the dead visiting them, and they audibly exclaim: "Oh, he's come back!" and to the spirit: "There's food there for you; eat!"

When some of the more distantly related male relatives go to fish in the deceased's canoe, as it were to test the spirit's goodwill, the *nanama* women frequently implore its aid, in a deprecatory address (*doudouriai riba*), as follows: "Your widow, feel sorry for her, thou spirit! Don't do harm, don't be angry! If they go for fish, cause them to catch it, for we are hungry! We continue to remain here twisting the twine for the signs of your mourning. Who will get fish for us, we are hungry? The hairs are worn off our legs by the twisting of the twine; cause fish to be caught for us."

A widower is a most lonely and pitiful object, perhaps more so than the widow, who has her helpers in grief about her, but most of the tabus and restrictions mentioned here, imposed by individual feeling or by custom, relate equally to widow and widower.

A widower, like a widow, has his head shaved. Some of the hair he makes into a cord, which he wears hanging from his ear lobes and from the holes round the edge of the ear. He wears many strands of string from shoulder to side; on the upper arm wide mourning armlets plaited from string with ends hanging; the same on wrists and ankles; just below the knees strings not made up but simply twisted (*euta*); round the neck a large circle of cane on which is twisted the true mourning sign (*magu egena*) of threaded white seeds. This can be taken over the head, and is called the *kusani paeapaea magu* (over-the-neck mourning). Also round his neck he wears a cord which he does not remove. He blackens his body, and from the neck cord suspends a relic of his late wife, nowadays an armlet, formerly an upper vertebra.

If he has imposed on himself a fast from pig, for one or two years, he wears a wide armlet of plaited cane, corresponding to that of the widow, which is made of vine stalk (*oa*). The fast is continued until the *oio* feast.

His food is not served to him in a wooden bowl, but in rudely plaited baskets (*apaka*). After a month he takes his food from a still ruder basket (*leva*), such as is used by women when gathering shell-fish from the reef. Widow or widower or chief mourners may undertake fasts till the *oio* feast, or they may take ordinary food. Others also, even of different sections of the village, will show their sympathy, in remembrance of the dead, by pledging themselves to fast from such foods as coconut, betel-nut, pig, leather-jacket fish (*ume*). On the day of the *guruma maduna* (*oio* feast), when the signs of mourning are discarded except for the nearest relatives, the main body of mourners once more go out to the big reef with the deceased's ceremonial net and catch *ume* to give to all those who have fasted from it. The widower will not take food nicely served up, because, he says: "My wife used to do it that way." This hardship continues till the *bau* feast, when they use the deceased's own nuts and kill the pigs belonging to him and the chief mourners. The widower himself does not partake of any of the food at the *bau* feast.

He must not go fishing till he has given a small feast to the whole village, known as the feast which permits of his going on to the reef for fish (*lagaru seisei maduna—i.e.* reef-doing feast). He does not wash or bathe until he has given another small feast (*torea*). Nor may he go far away until after the *baukiwonai* feast, at which the chief female mourners throw off some of the covering which has veiled them so completely.

If he can avoid it, he must not walk in the village without attempting to cover up his head and body. He must not make a garden.

Others in the village shrink from a widow or widower, but only if the loss is a recent one. If a widower sees a person approaching, he will often hide and avoid publicity or conspicuousness. He never leaves the house to speak to anyone; and anyone who speaks to him will say only a few words. Both talk in low voices. The same holds true of the

widow. The reason for the visitors' reticence is fear that ill luck may proceed from the spirit of the dead. The mourner speaks low out of respect for the dead *and fear of public opinion*, which is ready to point its finger and say: "That man does not respect his wife's memory." The widower, too, has ill luck to fear. To go fishing with others, for example, would mean that he and they would suffer ill luck and get no catch. The community thus shares the ill luck of the individual transgression. All the property and portable belongings of the widower must be dirty and of the poorest description. No wonder he looks a pitiable object, what with fear of public opinion, fear of ill luck, and real grief at the loss of his wife!

To clear itself from all possible ill luck the community expects, if it does not actually demand, that after the death of a near relation, such as anyone so close as father or brother, a male mourner, upon his return from his first visit to any place where the deceased was wont to visit, should make a *bau kiwonai* (small death) feast, in which the whole village can share.

CHAPTER XXIV

Other Forms of Burial

Some other Forms of Burial & some Gruesome Relics of the Dead—
Normal Burial Places & the Mortuary Huts

I WAS once walking into the bush, not far from the coastal village of Banaoro, in Port Glasgow, when my boys and I became nauseated by a horrible smell. As we hurried on to escape it we suddenly came upon a rude platform, supported at its four corners by rather slender posts about five feet high. One quick glance revealed that upon it was a human body rolled up in mats and trappings, fast rotting away. It was the first burial of its kind I had seen, though I had often heard of the practice as common among that section of the Mailu-speaking people.

At the burial platform (*arî*) no vigil is kept by the mourners, and their mourning signs and ornaments, like those of Mailu Island, they make not at the grave, but in the house in the village.

The skull of the deceased was subsequently removed, and such relics as cervical vertebræ were taken and kept. Upon the rotting and collapse of the platform, the bones were collected and buried about the deceased's coconuts. After performing the rites of the skull, and keeping it in the house for some years, it was often placed to guard the coconuts. I have seen that done myself.

Upon another occasion I saw from the sea a party bearing a corpse along the steep slopes of the high hills facing the sea outside Millport Harbour. I afterwards learned that they were carrying the remains of an aged woman, to lay them upon an isolated and exposed ledge on these slopes a long way from the village. No vigil was kept except at the village.

Another method of disposal of the dead common when I first came, alike on the mainland and on Mailu Island, was burial in shallow graves under their houses, with a plank over the top of the grave. Frequently nowadays, in sinking holes

for new posts in the renewal of village houses, human bones are found, and are always reburied in the hole dug for the post. Among the Mailu-speaking people the body is laid prone on the back or on its side, never sitting up.

In Orangerie Bay, half of which coast is peopled by Mailu-speaking folk, there stands near the mouth of the Oibada river a huge limestone rock (Doriodua). The rock has very little vegetation upon it, and has several times caused the mouth of the river to change its course through the soft sand of that shore. The rock is a lonely sentinel surrounded by the water of the river, and is exposed to the full blast of the prevailing south-east wind and the spray from the sea. It has been the burial place—for how long who can tell?—of the people of that part. It is cut up by the weather into ledges and small caves, and on or in these the remains of their dead were deposited. No vigil was kept at the burial place.

Such practices as the above are now things of the past, but during recent years two cases have come before my notice when bodies were laid in small disused houses and allowed to remain until complete decomposition had taken place. One was that of a man in Millport Harbour. As to the other, that of a Port Glasgow man, spoken of as the very chief of sorcerers, eye-witnesses have given me the following gruesome details.

He was one of the nicest spoken and most respectful native men I have ever met in this district, though not a pleasant individual to cross in any way. Deaths on Mailu Island are generally attributed to sorcery from Port Glasgow, and this man was feared by all as a powerful sorcerer. With his elder brother and their wives he lived away from the two larger villages in that bay, on land of his own. He was one of the few polygamists of the district, and with little provocation threw his wives off and took on others.

He died suddenly, falling unconscious over the sago he was pounding out of a log. Some said he was maliciously killed by sorcery, out of revenge. He was carried to his village and house, and there was a great wailing (*ini*) over him. His elder brother subsequently put the body in a small disused house, and kept vigil in it night and day. The body was not buried until the house practically fell down.

Not very long after his death, Borebo village was celebrating its big ceremonial feast—a feast that among the smaller communities takes place only after long periods. The dances on that occasion were to have been two *Govis*, three *Damoreas*, one *Baruga* and one *Bara*—a big affair in which the *Govis* were the most important. But though they danced the other dances, no *Govi* dance platforms were erected, the *Govi* dance called *Leko* did not come off, and only the interchange of pigs for the *Govi* masters took place, because they were afraid that they would be killed by the sorcery of the elder brother of this old sorcerer. When he died, the elder brother had put a tabu on the *Govi* for a year, or until Banaoro village in Port Glasgow should have celebrated his brother's spirit in the *Govi*. Then, and not till then, might the *Govi* be celebrated in neighbouring villages.

To emphasize this, the sorcerer's skull, prepared and decorated in the manner shortly to be described, was brought to Borebo and placed on view by his sister. Not long after the elder brother visited several villages, carrying with him in his net bag the skin of the sole of one of his brother's feet, and the peeled-off skin of the other foot from a little way above the ankle, which I was told he used as a wallet to hold those bits of areca-nut, ginger root (*siwowa*), cinnamon bark (*gobu*), etc., so common with his class. This man, however, did not long outlive his brother. After his gruesome vigil the wonder is that he lived as long as he did.

In all ordinary burials the ground in the immediate vicinity is kept scrupulously free from grass and weeds, and in many cases shrubs of coloured leaves, such as crotons, are planted at the head and foot of the grave. A small mortuary hut or shelter, not covering more than the area of the grave itself, was always erected over the grave and stood about two feet from the ground. This was burned down immediately after the feast at which all mourning was thrown off—that is the reason the natives give—to protect the deceased against the weather. All coconuts that fall on the piece of the deceased's land in which he is buried are left, and afterwards arranged in tens, or multiples of ten, with a short stick indicating the beginning of each new ten, so that any theft can be more easily detected. The tabu on these nuts is called *Neburu*, a tabu to be described later.

CHAPTER XXV

Mortuary Feasts & Rites

Feast *Dubus*: (1) *Bau Kiwonai*; (2) *Bau Ogoda*; (3) *Baevara*; (4) *Maa Damadama*—Exhumation of Skull; Fixing of Teeth (*Maa*); (5) *Oio*—The *Damorea* Dance

FEASTS—*madunas*—are innumerable. The word *maduna* signifies a division. According to the occasion the division is made and the share receives its special name.

As soon after burial as convenient—the same day, if burial took place in the morning—all the mature coconuts on the deceased's land, and also those of his relatives, are collected and brought into the village. Probably many of them have sprouted and the young leaves are often two or three feet long, so that there is little kernel in the nut. They have very likely been tabued for some reason or other. They are placed in heaps along the street and the deceased's relatives distribute them to the whole village according to *dubus*, by putting them before the houses representing these sub-clans, and each share is called a *dubu*.

Before going on any further, let us clear up once and for all this *dubu* business in its relation to feasts. It is a most important thing in connection with the social organization.

First, it is not to be mistaken for the same word as applied to the old club-houses, though I think the divisional *dubu* came from that originally.

Second, each greater family (sub-clan) is called a *dubu*, and each household in that *dubu* or sub-clan is related on the male side.

As the houses owned by members of the greater family have increased in number for feast purposes, the community has decided to recognize so many *dubus* within each sub-clan. This number is always known and adhered to, except when there is only a small quantity of food to be distributed.

There are twenty-two such greater families (*lugu*) on Mailu Island and there are fifty-four recognized feast shares or *dubus*.

Third, at one time or another, for marriage or to seek fresh pastures, members of these greater families have emigrated to other villages on the mainland, and to Laruoro and Loupomu. In their new spheres they perpetuate the sub-clan *dubu* name on the male side only; and coming, say, to Mailu on a ceremonial occasion, all members of the same sub-clan *dubu* name share the feast portion allotted to that sub-clan. On a big festival, when there may be many such visitors and a plentiful supply of food, the M.C. may increase the number of *dubus* for the sub-clan. This explanation shows at once the great importance of the family unit within the community, as a social organization for purposes of exogamy and for economic principles generally.

Having made this clear, let us get on with the actual succession of mortuary feasts.

(1) The distribution of nuts described above.

From the time of death till this burial distribution no games may be played, noise made or drums beaten in the village, for fear of incurring the indignation of the mourners. After the distribution one of the male mourners, by beating a drum, will give a signal that work, play and drumming may be permitted. Upon hearing the signal, a shout is raised, "*Gaba uriuri ai*," "*lele seisei ai*," meaning drums and play can be resumed. It is a shout of relaxation, like that of children getting out of school. This first distribution is called "small death" (*bau kiwonai*), or sometimes "play resumption death" (*leleseisei bau*).

(2) The mortuary feast is held a week or a fortnight after the first, according as food is ready. It is called "big death" (*bau ogoda*).

The male mourners and friends have been away making or buying sago and vegetables and collecting any pig or pigs that were owing to the deceased by sisters' or daughters' husbands. If at death the deceased had a pig, that also they kill now. A line of plaited coconut leaves is spread along the street in the deceased's clan and, according to the number of feast *dubus*, the food is put in bundles along the plaited leaves. To each, one taro at a time, sago in single sections, so also bananas, that there may be no inequality and room for jealousy. After the pigs are killed, equal strips

of the fat are placed on each *dubu* and the better or fleshy parts are given to the *nanama torea* (sisters and female cousins who have assisted the widow in her mourning). This feast is a signal for the *nanama torea* to go back to their own homes and families. The widow and some of the true sisters, and the nearer male relatives, do not partake of the feast, and go back again to their vigil at the grave.

To carry back the shares in this instance, the women bring their baskets from the different sections of the village. This feast marks the beginning of the most sacred of all tabus, called *neburu*, a tabu placed on all the coconuts of the deceased and of his relatives growing on that piece of his land which was chosen as the burial ground. Nuts similarly owned on other pieces of land are not *neburu*. On the mainland about the bays this feast is called *torea*.

(3) The widow and chief mourners finally leave the grave after a smaller feast, which is called *baevara* (walking away). After about three weeks or a month at the grave they take up village life again, pot-making, women's fishing on the reef, visiting and sailing as formerly.

As a rule there is no pig-killing at *baevara*, and as it is a household concern, there is not a great amount of food. The distribution in this case is called *odiwaona*, and only one share is given for each sub-clan (*lugu*, or complete family). The food is prepared by the mourning family. After distributing the food, the distributors call out together, as a kind of " three cheers for the widow ":

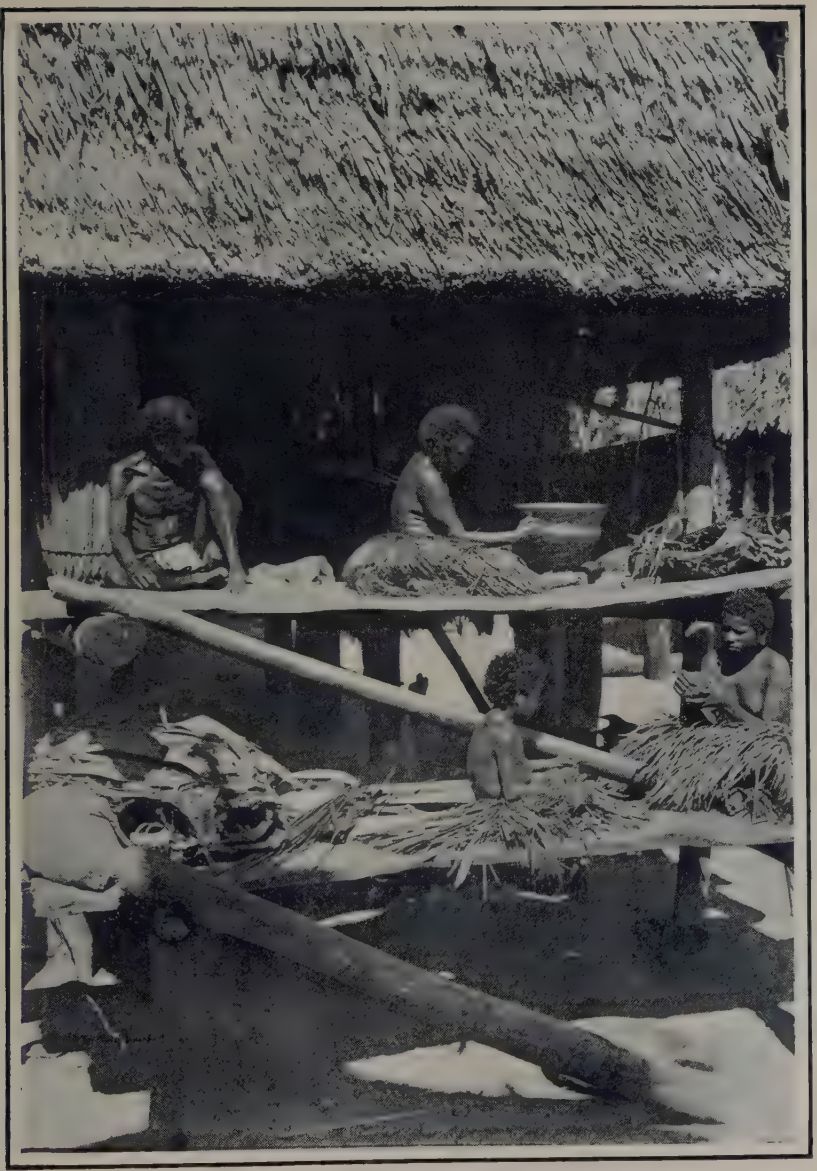
" *Doae avesa lagaru seisei, aae aae.*"
" The widow goes reefing."

The whole community then shouts together:

" *Ia ai, ia ai, ai aii, aii i . . . ! !* (on ascending notes).

(4) The next link in the chain is now lost, though when I first came here it was still maintained. As the Government has now prohibited the exhuming of skulls, the feast celebrating the occasion is also abandoned. It was called the *maa damadama* (replacing the teeth). In the case of my friend the sorcerer of Port Glasgow, the custom was observed again quite recently.

About two months after burial the grave was visited by



A Mialu Village Scene.

The woman on the left is kneading clay while the one on the right is scratching patterns on a pot before baking.

a small party of the chief mourners. If a maternal uncle of the deceased was alive he became M.C., if not, a sister's son, or even a son-in-law. The earth at the head of the grave was removed by hand with the help of half a coconut shell. Coming down to the wrappings they tested the grass bindings round the neck and, if these were decayed, proceeded to loosen the plaited-coconut shroud. If the grass bindings did not break easily they replaced the earth, saying that the skull was not yet *ligi*—*i.e.* the flesh had not yet sufficiently rotted on the skull (*moru*). If the bindings gave, they tested the head by turning or pulling it to see if it would come away easily; if it did, they exclaimed: "The spirit is well disposed, it is coming away." The head was then placed over a fire on a rock to burn off as much of the flesh as possible, then scraped (*ipaipa*), put on a mat, and carried to the sea to be washed.

Meanwhile the others at the grave kept up the mourning wail. Two or more of the cervical vertebræ (*darabu kisa*) were removed and cleaned and eventually tied or woven into one of the signs of mourning. Sometimes they were suspended from the neck and a widow generally wove one into her string weeds at her side. These relics of the dead were not necessarily worn continually, but were brought out and worn at mortuary feasts.

After being washed in the sea, the teeth were removed and the skull was boiled in a new pot. The upper and lower teeth were carefully tied up separately, the skull was placed in the sun for a day, and the teeth put back to see that they were all there. If complete, they said: "*Ousa de, enade*" ("Complete, that's right"). If one were missing—there generally was one missing—a trick to try the good will of the spirit—they besought the spirit to reveal his missing tooth: "*Gana maa odimatagoi!*" Sitting round they made search for it, until the culprit suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, here it is!" Being satisfied that all the teeth were in place they took the skull to the house and went to the mainland for food and for a certain fibre to tie the teeth secure and fasten the lower jaw in position. They also got beeswax for making up the false nose and gums. The son-in-law had to provide a pig for the feast. On their return the skull was properly finished and decorated with feathers and shell

ornaments, and on the day of the feast was put in a prominent place on the verandah of the house of mourning or carried from house to house by request.

On the *damadama* day, the day of the feast, relatives and friends came from far and near to see it, and many to fondle and wail over it. It was kept on view for many days, most of the ornaments being taken off at night, to be rearranged the following day, and so on until the big performance, when the deceased's spirit is danced (*leiai*).

One day I walked into a village in Table Bay. The women, young fellows and children were away in the gardens. Old Koo, the chief man of the village, was sitting on his verandah with a basket in his lap; in this basket he had two skulls to which he was affectionately talking. My approach on the soft sand surprised the old man, and he was for putting them hastily away, but I begged him not to do so, and we had a long talk about them. The skulls were both elaborately got up, ready for an approaching feast. He told me that one boy had died from sickness and the second had been killed by an alligator very soon after. That night Koo and the two skulls were my sleeping companions in the old man's house.

(5) The *oio*, the next, and much bigger, mortuary feast, is held about twelve months after death, or, if possible, at the next *lioro* season following the date of death. It marks the occasion when the mourning signs for all but the very nearest relatives are cut off and burned—*e.g.* the mourning signs on the *nanama torea*, sons-in-law, or daughters-in-law and cousins. The widow or widower, parents, and true brothers and sisters continue to wear the full mourning unless, as is sometimes the case, a particular mourning party, feeling unable to meet the expense or labour involved in the real and final dancing of the spirit at the *Govi* festival, decide to celebrate the spirit finally at the *oio*.

In this case, if the widow or the nearest mourner receives a pig from the son-in-law, the party will go to her and cut off her marks of mourning and those of the other nearest relatives and burn them together. She takes the skull in her left arm and holding aloft in her right a ceremonial adze (*adivi*) and a piece of beaten bark like the man's

ceremonial perineal band, she dances (*leiai*) his spirit on a platform or in the *damorea* dance procession.

In smaller villages on the mainland, among the former hill-dwelling Mailuans, only the *damorea* dance celebrates the *oio*. But in the bigger villages, like that on Mailu Island, the *oio* naturally becomes a much bigger affair, for the deaths within the time have been more. Other dances such as *bara* or *selo* may be introduced as well as the *damorea*. For any dances at an *oio* feast no signs or tabu marks are erected in the village street beforehand.

At the *oio* all the *neburu* nuts of the deceased and his relatives are brought into the village, and they and other food, consisting of sago and vegetables, are distributed according to the number of feast *dubus*. If for reasons mentioned above the *oio* is chosen by any party as the final celebration of the spirit, the skull is buried again after the *oio*, in a different site from that of the grave. How lovely it must be for them to feel, supposing they ever did feel it, that they can once more go about clean without incurring the disapproval of public opinion!

Nowadays, in place of the skull which they used to carry in the dance, I have seen them use a calabash, or, as we call it here, a lime gourd, on which they put white marks to represent eyes, etc.

On Mailu Island and in other large villages the chief mourner decides beforehand what particular dance shall be performed, though it is generally either *damorea* (women only) or *bara* (men only).

The *damorea* is borrowed from the east end, Southern Massim, and in the songs accompanying the dance only South Massim words are used, where the words are recognizable at all.

Here is a brief description of the *damorea*. The number of women taking part varies from six to ten. Each set is led by an older woman, and the ages of the others range from a married woman with children down to a girl-child.

The get-up is elaborate. They wear great quantities of skirts in the latest fashion, often cut to hang in ridges or tiers. The bodies of the dancers are well oiled, and designs are picked out in white lines round the mouth, eyes and cheeks. The hair is sprinkled all over with the white down

feathers of the Torres Strait pigeon, and ornaments of a particular design for the *damorea* are worn on the head.

Wealth owned by the different families is distributed about the persons of the dancers; armshells adorn the arms and wrists with specially pretty plaited armlets in which are stuck coloured leaves and bunches of strong-smelling leaves (*mura*). An elaborate and expensive east-end ornament (*bagi*) is worn round the neck and suspended between the breasts, or if at the time they do not possess one, strings of beads; behind the neck is hung a large white cowrie shell decorated with beads and streamers. One or more of the dancers carry the *adivi*, or ceremonial stone adze, in one hand, and a piece of beaten-bark cloth or a basket or netted bag in the other. All the rest carry something in each hand. The dressing-up is done in the bush, where the procession is formed, and the *damorea* advance in single file, dancing their way into the village.

Young men walking slowly on either side do the drumming for them. The leading woman, facing the next of the line, advances backwards! For weeks beforehand they are drilled in most of the parts by men; some of the parts are songless, and are a danced mimicry, really well staged, of such village doings and events as cutting down a tree for a canoe; poling a canoe down the river; the swamping or capsizing of a canoe; catching the leather-jacket fish; a theft of wealth in the shape of netted bags, baskets, armshells or ornaments; nursing a baby, or any particular incident that may have caused talk in village life. Some of the parts are danced by two or three women, while in some the whole dancing party combine. On the faces of the silent dancers there is nothing but extreme anxiety. The step, though graceful, is a very slow movement of one foot after another, the heels raised from the ground and the knees bent, while the body is held perfectly upright so that the waving of the feathers or ornaments may keep time with the drumming. The performers themselves remain perfectly silent in all their mimicry. The chant is sung by the drummers and the onlookers. The latter indignantly criticize any of the performers who do not come up to scratch, and the faces of these show the strain of extreme anxiety lest they may not meet with public approval. The

dance is a spectacular display, but beyond that may appear somewhat inane to those who do not understand and appreciate its meaning.

In the case of the *oio*, as with the much bigger ceremony to follow, the dancing is on one day (*liso*) and continues without break until dawn next day.

About ten o'clock, or as soon as the nuts and food are ready, the distribution is made and the pigs cut up.

Crowds come from neighbouring villages on the *liso* day, the relatives of the deceased naturally, and many others out of curiosity or to look on and mix with the crowd.

Men have told me that during the night of the dance they keep a very careful watch upon their wives, especially if these are taking part in the dance, and they also naïvely tell me that the wives carefully watch their husbands. But public opinion sanctions no general licence for improper practice, though public opinion, being elderly, has forty winks at frequent intervals.

Immediately after the *oio* the mortuary hut (*kapa*) over the grave is destroyed and burned.

CHAPTER XXVI

Preparations for the *Govi* Festival

The *Ilara* Stone, its Magic & Laying—The Cult of the *Govi*—Unbroken Family Sequence of *Govi*—The *Govi Gora* (Tabu)—Anointing & Laying of its Posts—The *Moto Badi* Day—The Cult of the *Gau* Leaves—The Coconut *Gora* (Tabu) and the Coconut Spell

THINGS of considerable importance may take place at the *oio*, but these are really preparatory steps to the great festival, *Govi Maduna* or *Maura*. To be one of the masters of this is the greatest event in the life of any Mailu native.

I wish I could do justice from the native standpoint to the importance of the *Govi* and its strenuous preparations. We foreigners, however, can only do our best to fathom the depths of native custom and psychology, and in this chapter I venture to take the lead-line in hand and try to report the soundings as truly as I can.

In the first place, the *oio* is the occasion when the male chief mourner receives from his brother-in-law, son-in-law, or some other relative, a cooking stone called *Ilara*. The presentation is made by laying it down in the street just in front of the man's verandah. Before setting it in place the man presenting it goes to a family priest (a spell-owning man) and asks him to pronounce the spell on the stone. The priest, after the usual chewing, pronounces the spell and anoints the stone in the usual way (*amamani*). One such spell is as follows:—

(1) "*Aaaa apumoneaisaa mu.*
(2) *Aaaa apuenaisaa mu.*
(3) *Aaaa monemoneaisaa mu.*
(4) *Aaaa moramoraisaa mu.*
(5) *Aaaa Merere a uenaisaa mu.*
(6) *Ruduruduisaa mu.*"

Lines 1 and 3 mention a very small fish which takes short leaps from the water in shoals. I think this refers to

the particularly short leap in the *Govi* dance, called " *Leko*." Lines 2 and 4 are a magic to produce sensual lust on the great occasion and express the hope that many girls or women may be prepared to ascend the *Govi* platform. The fifth line is the wish that the girls' and women's skirts may be beautifully or attractively made, again with the same end in view. The last line is a chorus taken up by all the onlookers. The meaning of *rudurudu* is lost. This explanation is not my surmise, but has been given me by those best informed.

Other men then dig out a spot for the stone to rest in, and the " priest " lays it. Once in place, the *Ilara* is never moved or shaken until the *Govi* is celebrated; it is then thrown away. Two other common stones are put near enough to allow a pot to rest upon them for cooking. But only the one stone is sacred. From time to time and on special preparatory occasions this fireplace will be used by the *Govi gubina* (master of the *Govi*) to cook food for those who are helping him in his many duties. The presentation of the stone is tantamount to a promise that the man presenting it will bring a pig for the master on the *Govi* festival. I will describe on the next page the provision of the sacred wood for kindling the first fire in this fireplace. The master has to arrange for any other dances which may be held on the same occasion as the *Govi*—a *dauge*, perhaps a *damorea*, a *bara*, etc.—and he will have to give a pig for each of the dances for which he is responsible.

There may be other *damoreas* or *baras* to take place within the clan on the *Govi* festival, apart from those arranged by any *Govi* master, and in some cases *Ilaras* are used to prepare for these. But on Mailu Island, and in villages west of Mailu, the *Ilara* stone is generally recognized as indicating the *Govi*.

The Govi is looked upon as an unbroken family sequence from far generations back, and, I think, as possessing due religious significance, as though the cult of the chief practices connected with it were a kind of Apostolic succession. It first concerns the sub-clan or greater family, but the sub-clan is so closely interwoven with the life of the clan, and the wealth required for its celebration is so great, that through their elders the clans arrange for the celebration of the *Govi* or *Govis* in each clan at the same time; it then assumes also

an economic significance, for then they make (mostly in the shape of pigs) all repayments for debts incurred in connection with inter-clan marriages or similar or intermediate ceremonials.

Referring to pigs pledged for marriages and contributions to ceremonies, a man said to me once: "All these years I have been giving my wealth away to others, now all that will come back to me, as I am about to celebrate my father's spirit in the *Govi*, but I shall have to give that wealth (*babadau*) away again to pay those who will perform for me." He meant that it would all go towards the ritual for the *Govi*.

Some months after the *Ilara* has been solemnly placed in position and when it is known that there is food about, and that the *Govi* master is in a fair state of readiness, a brother or brother-in-law suggests to him that he must put up the second important sign in front of his house.

This is generally done at the same time in the other clans, and a feast is held, called the *Motobadi* (cowrie-shell-tying sign). The master of each *Govi* contributes a pig, and he and his people provide all the food which is distributed in each clan according to the number of feast *dubus*.

The erection of the sign is called the *Gora vaida* (erection of tabu). This *gora* is the most sacred tabu among the people. If the *Ilara* was placed in position at the *oio*, the *Gora* is erected close beside it. If, however (and here I must anticipate a little), the *Govi* master was appointed at a previous celebration of the *Govi* by being presented with a piece chopped from the central pole adorning the *Govi* platform, the *Ilara* stone is put in its place at the *Gora vaida*. The central pole mentioned here is called the *ailopulopu*, and immediately after each *Govi* the then master breaks off a section of the *ailopulopu* and carries it to the house of one of his relatives, generally a relative by marriage, as a signal that he is to be master of one of the next *Govis* and to celebrate the spirit of one of his deceased kin not celebrated as yet. This portion of the *ailopulopu* is sacredly kept in the house until the *Gora vaida* day, when the new master chops it up to form the first fire about the sacred stone at the base of the sacred sign.

Herein lies the unbroken thread of ancestral continuity which means so much to our people. A family priest is

apprised of the fact that the *Govi gora* is to be erected in front of So-and-so's house and, while the master and his brother-in-law are getting the posts ready, goes off to his land to get *gau* stalks and leaves. The plant is found in almost every patch of native garden and near the man's coconuts. The priest pronounces a spell upon the shrub, each line of which is an appeal to an ancestral locality somewhere on the coast or to the fish-hawk (*amua*) of that locality. The rest of each line means, "I am biting thee," referring to the biting of the bit of bark and the chewing of the betel-nut. The spell I have refers mostly to hills, and it finishes with the line:

"*Mari gau areva ina gobu ma, gau ni erioo, eriareva, areva aee, aee.*"

This means: "The village leaves sweep clean, by my *gobu* (bit of bark) leaves, they are about to see, see clean, clean."

It is an appeal to ancestral spirits to come well disposed and see that the preparations are being made for the celebration of the *Govi*.

After the prayer and anointing of the *gau* leaves, the priest similarly anoints the sole of his foot, places it firmly at the butt of the *gau* stalk and pulls at the stalk with his hands; if it comes away readily, he and the onlookers say, "The wealth will be good," and they will get pigs quickly. With the stalks on his shoulder he returns to the village and whisks the sand with the leaves at the spots where the two posts for the *Gora* are to stand, chanting the following spell as he keeps time by whisking the *gau* leaves:—

"*Ooo bubuto au bore manu naa manu au io auraro, au raro aee.*"
"Ground dove foot bird bird foot sweep, sweep."

"*Korauso o au bore manu naa iau raro, auraro, auraro aee.*"
"Scrub hen foot bird sweep, sweep, sweep."

The two birds mentioned live on the ground. The second scratches leaves and twigs together and builds the mound nest.

The men who are about to erect the *Gora* give the priest a garden digging-stick, and taking this in his hand he pronounces a spell and anoints it with betel-nut saliva (the operation known as *amamani*).

The spell I have is:

" *Baribi neure ma apulaaisaa mu.*
" Baribi outside bark by I am biting thee."
" *Vere na vau ma apulaaisaa mu.*"
(Meaning lost) " I am biting thee."
" *O, Vitiu ma apulaaisaa mu.*"
" Oh, Vitiu " (ancestor), " I am biting thee " (*i.e.* celebrating his magic).

The spell is pronounced as he holds the digging end of the stick (*dora*) close to his face, and as soon as he has anointed it he returns it to those about to dig the holes for the posts. It amounts to an appeal to the ancestral spirits for blessing on an undertaking which involves the digging up of a bit of the ancestral street, and a petition that any ill-disposed spirit will politely keep off. Having given the stick to the men, the priest tears off two or three leaves from the *gau* stalk, and uttering again the same or part of the same spell upon them, the holes and the ends of the posts which go into the ground, he lays the leaves at the bottom of the holes and the posts are let down on to them.

There is nothing about the *Gora* that need take our time, except to say that each man who ties a white cowrie shell on the two horizontal bars fastened transversely on the posts will bring a pig to the *Govi gubina*. As a rule the first to tie a cowrie is the brother-in-law (*naivagu*).

On that day begins the ceremonial cooking on the *Ilara* stone, which is done by the men of the *Govi gubina's* immediate household. No one dwelling in the house eats the food thus cooked, but it is distributed by the master to all the kin. The immediate household partakes of food cooked in the ordinary way by the womenfolk.

The night following the erection is called the *nivi uiwunua garu*—that is, the night for the sleeping ready for dreams—in which the spirits tell them they will assist in the getting of pigs. The spells are pronounced in religious fashion on everything connected with the *Govi*, invoking the aid of ancestral spirits to procure as much wealth as possible and to guard against ill luck.

Among the hill-dwelling Mailuans, and more so as the Mailu extend eastwards, the pigs brought in on the *Govi* festival are for exchange, and it is the duty of the *Govi gubina* on the day to do all the exchanging. The pigs eaten are those provided by himself and his helpers. On Mailu Island and westwards all the pigs are killed, cut up and portioned out according to *dubus*.

By this time another *Gora* has been erected in the village street. Probably it was erected immediately after the mortuary feast (*oio*). It consists of a long pole, with two other poles attached as branches rising obliquely upwards, and hung with streamers of crinkled coconut leaves. At the ends of these and also at the top of the pole are tied bunches of cassowary feathers and the fibre sheathing of the coconut leaf. About three feet from the ground a pole is tied horizontally with its ends resting upon two short posts.

The central pole is placed in position ceremonially, as described above. The end of the pole rests upon a couple of *gau* leaves laid in the bottom of the hole. Three such *tona goras* are erected in the village, one each for Bodeabo and Urumoga clans and one for Maradubu and Morau. Next the priest takes a conch shell and blows a long blast, turning to the four winds, and then after the usual chewing pronounces the coconut spell, *amu uura*, to the spirits of his first ancestors. Here is one such spell:

" *Severiori ma daviai.*"
" Severiori you call them."

" *Baragabo ea ama daviai.*"
" Baragabo call coconuts."

" *Eunuduedue laivara.*"
" Eunuduedue bring forth."

" *Gabina umuumu.*"
(Expression of beauty directed to the south.)

" *Ina leva la gabi la aiaisi minibilai.*"
" My *leva*" (kind of nut) " on top cause to come give me."

" *Ina dubani gabi la aiaisi minibilai.*"
" My *duba*" (another kind of nut, and so on, mentioning the different kinds of coconuts—*e.g. aani*).

" *Mudo garu ma aiaisi minibilai.*"
(*Mudo* is a seaweed rubbed on trunks of coconuts to make them grow!)

" *Moto geu ma,*" etc.
(Another medicine used to make coconuts grow.)

" *Biga ni garugaru,*" etc.
" In the very early mornings," etc.

" *Paeaoro . . .*" etc.
" Falling together at my feet."

" *Odioro de . . .*" etc.
" As I put them together."

" *Betu oro de . . .*" etc.
" Kick them together towards me."

" *Ina gado gabi la,*" etc.
" To my coconut tree-top cause them to come give me."

This spell is also used on the land where the coconuts are growing, to make them prolific, and after pronouncing the spell the usual ceremonial spitting is directed to the trunk of the tree. The above *Gora* is known as the *tona gora*, and is a strict tabu on *all* the nuts of the community.

A man who transgresses the law by eating a nut and is found out is said to be spirit-possessed (*boi egi*)—that is, the spirit of a deceased man indwells him and brings ill luck to all and sundry if he joins in fishing, etc.[1]

NOTE

[1] See p. 185, Chapter XIX.

CHAPTER XXVII

The *Govi* Festival

Further Preparation & the *Govi* Festival—Change in Aspect in Village Life —The *Kanare* Feast & the Cult of the Mango—*Boroa Oioi*—The Betel-nut Spell—Dedication & Laying of Platform Posts—The *Gabugabu* Men—The Tabu on their Houses—The *Uisari* Man & his Seclusion—The Cult of the *Gau* Leaves—The *Gau Deudeu* Ceremony —Sweeping the Village—The Consecration of *Govi* Masters' Houses —The Spirits' Farewelling Spell—*Boi Tuituini*—The Start for Aroma—The Return—Erection of Platforms—The *Ailopulopu* Pole—*Liso* Day, Dance & Song—The *Maduna* (Distribution) & After

THE reader will remember that until the spirit of a deceased man has been danced, and also his skull, or nowadays its substitute, the *chief* mourners throw off none of their mourning. Public opinion expects that this shall be done at the *Govi* festival; as we have seen, exceptions are made in the case of those who, not having family connections extensive enough, decide that the *leiai* shall take place at the *oio* or some other occasion upon which a pig is given to the chief mourner.

Fear of public derision against a man or family not prepared to show due respect to the deceased perpetuates a custom which involves many deprivations and considerable hard work. Psychologically, too, the *Govi* festival alone gives them the satisfying assurance of the final departure of the spirit of the deceased to the land of spirits, when the last traces of mourning are finally done away with. It may be from one to two years after the *Oio* that the *Govi* festival takes place, and sometimes longer.

After the erection of the *Govi gora* on the *moto badi* day, a changed aspect comes over the whole village community. Work is more strenuous; much time is spent making sago on the mainland, in preparing new planks and sail material, in re-tying and caulking material for canoes; old houses are repaired and re-thatched; great quantities of pots are made; men meet in groups to consider the best chances of getting native wealth; weather and season are canvassed

with a view to trading trips east and west; debts are discussed, and trial balances of their mental ledgers made; the fathers of the city sit in council all night and all day; night visits are paid to the *tona gora*, its conch shell is blown, and coconut spells are addressed to the four winds; young girls' faces are tattooed; marriages are arranged, so as to make sure of pigs being forthcoming from some at any rate who might not otherwise endure the hardship of getting wealth enough to buy a pig; harangues are delivered at night from the platforms of the *Govi* masters' houses, becoming more frequent as the day draws near.

At *silowo* season, about the end of March, they make a trial trip to the east to see how agents are getting on and what stock they have, and at the same time they search the reefs there for the cone shell to make armlets. They bring back any wealth they have found, and grind and polish the shells. Village life is now in fullest activity.

Towards the middle of December (*lioro*), if wealth enough has been collected, the last preparatory feast is held—the *Kanare*—a one-day affair and a big one. First it takes the form of hilarious joy, decoration, dances, drumming and display of wealth. Further, it celebrates the cult of the mango; the erection and dedication of the posts for the *Govi* dance platforms; the beginning of the strict fasts and tabus of the several masters of the *Govi* and helpers, with their strict seclusion in houses away from the womenfolk.

Early in the morning of *Kanare* day, men and women, youths and maidens, emerge from everywhere with all their finery and wealth displayed about their persons, and with drums, song and dance for some hours give themselves up to a joy which seems to suggest that life is made up of joy and nothing else. Young fellows strut about the street decorated with feathers and finery, and for once look quite clean and oiled. Girls flit self-consciously about, or parade in mannequin fashion, with their eyes " sailing about " (*ini laea laea*), as the natives say. Towards noon, food, nuts and pig are distributed as usual, much being set aside as *taba*, or victualling, for the journey so soon to begin.

The *Govi* masters, their helpers and the elders of the village, the priests and wealth-spell owners are all deeply blackened and wear the ceremonial mourning ornaments.

After the distribution of food these last go into the bush to cut off mango branches. Nothing of importance happens in the bush, except that any bits of mango that may fall while they are chopping off the branches are collected in a mat to be put with the other pieces later. They then fall into a rude procession, led by the *Govi* masters carrying the branches, with men on either side blowing conch shells. As they get on to the beach a better procession is formed, headed as before by the branch bearers and followed by the helpers of the several *Govis*. These are in strict black and wear solemn expressions. They then start the *Govi* dance and song and advance very slowly, using the *Govi* dance step with its intermittent jump, at which the branches are raised and the conch shells blown. Hearing the slow advance, the women go to that end of the village where the procession will enter. Their heads are covered with white feathers, they have on their finest petticoats, and with coloured leaves in their hands they start a kind of beckoning dance to welcome the mango branch procession. As this advances, with its leaders facing sometimes their followers and sometimes the village, the women give way for them. As they go through the village street, a branch of mango is placed upon the verandah of each *Govi* master's house.

When I last saw this ceremony on Mailu Island the several clans broke up into different groups, though they often unite into one band.

They brought down pandanus mats from the masters' houses and laid them on the street for the different groups. In each case the master sat at the head, holding the mango branch resting on the ground against his shoulder. His helpers grouped themselves around on the mats. Near the master sat a priest, or spell (*uura*) man. All taking part were completely blackened and wore their ceremonial perineal cords, while the older men had cassowary feathers in their armlets and waistbands, and shell ornaments round their foreheads, a small string bag hung from one shoulder, and from the other the lime gourd. Their expressions were intensely earnest. The whole village looked on from the verandahs.

Next, the priest took a betel-nut and sharpened shell from

his string bag. He looked seriously at the nut, and, moving his head about as though in earnest conversation with someone, uttered over it the husking-betel-nut spell (*ueni iriiri uura*). It is chanted and led by the priest, but the others join in in the last few notes of each line. Unfortunately I am not musical, but the music produced by these men's deep voices, in perfect time and without a trace of discord, has a great fascination for me. The spell consists of an address to the places in the east of Papua best known for producing betel-nut—Maivara (in Milne Bay), Durubi, Boroai, Verevere (in Mullens Harbour), Dahuni, Bonabona. The rest of each line is unintelligible, but the spell comes from the east,

" *Ooooo Maivara bedana aseri tabubu e aseri tabubu aee aee*,"

and so on for each locality.

Having anointed the husk with saliva, the priests broke away the husk and divided out the portions of nut to the others, who all chewed and chanted. Meanwhile the priest took a knife, held it up and uttered a spell over it, not chanted; again it looked for all the world as if he were addressing a person, moving his head from side to side while he gazed intently at the knife. When he had finished his muttering he anointed the knife with saliva and took the mango branch, and slowly, deliberately and in rhythm with the stanzas of the chant chopped it into small lengths, at the same time leading a most melodious " cutting-mango spell " (*boroa oioi uura*), in which the others joined. The small chippings remained on the mat, and after the spell was concluded the chopped-up branch and its chips were carefully wrapped in the mat and the bundle was carried into the master's house and placed in the hanging shelf over the fireplace until the day after the *Govi* celebration, when the master presents it, together with the *ailopulopu* sign, to the one he appoints as his successor.

In the evening the foundation posts of the *Govi* dance platform were dedicated and laid, when the same spell was used, or a similar one, as at the sinking of the posts for the *moto badi* sign, the idea being to propitiate the spirits, that nothing might occur to hinder their getting pigs, and that the men might have a safe and speedy return from Aroma.

HOUSE ORNAMENTATION IN A MAILU VILLAGE.

The ends of the roof battens are carved into the form of birds.

NATIVE WOMEN'S SKIRTS.

1. A widow's. 2. A baby girl's first. 3. A best dress. 4. A work-a-day dress.

A "Damorea" entering the Village.

This women's dance consists in the danced representation of incidents in community life and custom, and requires long rehearsal.

Women Dancers for the "Damorea."

The skirts are specially made for the occasion.

After the erection of the posts a cord was tied round them as a tabu sign against interference, disrespect, or the approach of women. The same evening the masters and their helpers (the *gabugabu* men) went into seclusion and fasted, and a spell was pronounced upon their houses—for the time being sacred—and the stalk of a creeping vine was tied round them to prevent the approach of women. Before retiring, the *gabugabu* men took sips of salt water.

If the master has a young daughter, she too is made sacred (*tabuai*), and sits on the under platform as the priest pronounces the spell. She is previously warned by her father to put on new skirts, about which there is no taint of the reef with its tabued fish, also against walking in the salt water for fear of the same taint. Her duty is to carry food and drink to the *gabugabu* men in seclusion. No food is allowed except roasted food and no drink but young coconut heated in its shell over the fire. *Gabugabu* means "bake" or "roast." The tabuing of the house and men is against the approach of women, with whom for the time being no *gabugabu* man may have anything to do. These men are sacred till after the *Govi* festival.

On Mailu Island their separation is only a short one, and the *Kanare* is generally arranged so that, if weather and other considerations permit, the sailing may take place on the morrow.

By this time the masters had each asked men to dance the *Govi* for them. The *Leko* dancers are scarce and the price is a huge pig. If the dancer is more or less a novice, he will ask to go into seclusion with the others, that when the day comes he may not slip! If he is experienced he only goes into seclusion and fasts upon the return from Aroma.

The master had also asked another experienced man to be his *uisari* man. This word means "sleeping over," and refers to sleeping over certain leaves which he spreads under his sleeping-mat as charms (pig charms). During his fast this man is sacred above all others. He remains behind in seclusion in the tabued house. Only boys or male friends may bring him food. His slightest movement may cause the displeasure of the spirits and the consequent failure of those away to get pigs. On the mainland about

Orangerie Bay this man emerges from his vigil in so weak and emaciated a state that for some time he can scarcely stand or walk about. On Mailu Island and its connected villages west the tabu is not so strictly observed, but as far as possible he refrains from turning on his mat; he never washes or drinks fresh water, and uses only bits of wood to scratch himself; his hair is tied up with string in little knots all over his head; and he leaves his house only in obedience to the calls of nature, and even then is covered with mats from head to foot. Were others to see his face, especially women, those at Aroma would have no success.

Upon the return of the first canoe with news of success this man comes forth.

The day following *Kanare* the final preparations for sailing are made, final farewells are said to the spirits of the village, and the final spells are laid on tabued houses.

The wealth is hung up ready in the houses of those sailing, final touches are given to the canoes, and a good supply of pots and food is collected for the journey. The *Govi* masters and their helpers going off about midday into the bush, and using the same spells as before, gather *gau* stalks and leaves and bring them solemnly into the village. There all the *gabugabu* men fall into lines, one line behind the other, according to the number of *Govis*. They are all deeply blackened and carry the same ornaments as during the cutting up of the mango branches. When I last saw them they fell in at one end of the village and in perfect time and slow step marched the length of the street and back, whisking the *gau* leaves in sweeping action to suit the swing of their bodies and the solemn Gregorian chant. I raised my hat during the ceremony, as for their most solemn rite. They were calling upon their ancestral spirits in turn to witness ancestral custom and vouchsafe their aid and blessing upon the undertaking in hand.

Mentioning the names of his ancestors, first one, then another, would lead the chant, upon which all the others would join in as chorus for the remainder of the stanza. Whether the chant was upon four or eight notes (more likely four) I do not know or care much. I know it held me. Those fifty or sixty heathen in dead earnest and solemnity passed and repassed in front of me, so intent on

their business that scarcely anything could draw off their attention, while the whole village observed unbroken silence.

One such charm chant on that occasion, chanted as though the ancestor himself were repeating it, and led by one of the *Govi* masters, was:

" *Ia Lilisagoea ma gau ni erioo eriareva areva aee.*
Ia Kuakari ma gau ni erioo eriareva areva aee.
Ia Muneuau ma gau ni erioo eriareva areva aee."

The meaning as near as possible for the first line is:

" I Lilisagoea see *gau* see clean clean."

Lilisagoea was the chanter's grandfather (*owai*), Kuakari, his great-grandfather (*goina*), Muneuau, his father (*abai*).

The spell leaders afterwards took the *gau* stalks and leaves and tied them ceremonially to the main post in front of each *Govi* master's house. The reciter uttered the following spell in a solemn manner and low voice with his head close to the post, and wound up in the usual manner:

" *Gaile uru bo ma apuisauta.*
Gobula uru bo ma apuisauta.
Mari uru bo ma apuisauta."

Gaile refers to the orchid, and *Gobula* refers to a variegated leaf shrub, and *Mari* is the word for village. The rest of the line in each case means " at the main part of the house I bite thee," referring to the betel-nut and cinnamon bark.

When the final arrangements had been made, all repaired to the canoes. On the bow of each canoe looking towards the sea stood one of the priests of the people, who solemnly waved the *gau* stalk again, as though sweeping the front of the canoe, and uttered a spell. The spell I heard then was the same as that used when laying the posts for the *moto badi*, and the same old man pronounced it.

After that he turned towards the village uttering another spell. This second is really a spell on the women as a parting farewell, and on the expected trade with Aroma:

" *Akai oniba da ma apuero enaisausamu.*
Teva boraa da ma apuero enaisausamu.
Babari boraa da ma apuero enaisausamu.
Avari boraa da ma apuero enaisausamu."

This spell when used thus is called the "wealth-spell" and refers to the getting of pigs (*boraa*) and also to the sensuality awakened on the occasion of the *Govi* festival, as seen in the word *enaisausamu*. The spell used with the *gau* stalk is called the spirit-farewell spell (*boi tuituini uura*).

Immediately after the spells the sails are hoisted and the ordinary human farewells taken. 'It is a sight never to be forgotten, this eager fleet of fifteen or twenty double sailing canoes leaving before the last of the trade winds, with the priests ceremonially sweeping their *gau* stalks over the bow. The priests do this at intervals each day of the journey.

The chapter on "Armshells" describes the trading at Aroma.

There is to be no unseemly noise in the village. Women are to practise the *damorea* dance carefully in the evenings, and the children are prohibited from noisy games in the village street, and in the darkness of the upper portion of their respective houses the *uisari* men keep up their dismal fasting vigil and shudder at any undue noise, refreshing themselves with dreams of pigs—in their view communications from the spirit world of its approval.

While the men are away, during the hot spring and early summer days, the women and girls are all busy making new skirts, and getting ready dance decorations and paraphernalia. The village is kept clean and swept; the evenings are spent practising the various *damoreas* to the drumming of the young fellows who remained behind. The older women go on the reef every night, and there is an air of general expectancy.

The men leave in December and come back with the first blow of the westerly. This is usually a big one, and I have known them to arrive here under practically bare poles, tearing along at a furious rate. They mostly come back together. The sago, hung in huge sausages round the houses, tons of it, has long since become sour and uneatable. So as soon as the pigs are landed, the canoes go off again, this time to make fresh sago and get what food they can purchase with the many pots the women have made. Most of the wood for the *Govi* platforms has been got ready while the men were west. Coconut-palm trunks are always used

for the bearers, and for the flooring any old boards or new ones hastily made. The long pole which stands in the centre of the platform crowned with cassowary feathers has to be brought from the mainland. Strings of cane, tied from its top to the edge of the platform, and decorated at intervals, act as stays. This central pole is called the *Ailopulopu*. With the mango pieces mentioned above it constitutes the unbroken link between one *Govi* festival and the next. The platforms are erected and finished as soon as the sago and food are brought home and the coconuts collected in the bush. No time is lost, for the pigs are still lying tied up under the houses and the people are afraid of their dying before the feast.

No sooner is the date fixed than it seems to be known everywhere. It is one of the seven wonders to me how people at long distances hear of the date of the feast.

The day of the dance and the coming together of the people is called *liso*. Dancing starts about three or four in the afternoon. The different dancing groups arrange themselves in parties in the adjacent bush. It is quite a common thing in some villages for dancers from other villages to do some of the dances. On Mailu Island they get up all the dances themselves—they are not noted for paying their hard-earned pigs to get others to dance for them! At the last Mailu festival there were six *govis*, four *damoreas*, three *baras* and two *dauges*.

The dance for the *Govi* is called *Leko*. It is performed by one man only in each case. The song and drumming is done for him by a group of young fellows standing at the foot of the *ailopulopu* pole. Women and girls also take part by following the *leko* dancer round and round the edge of the platform. This is raised about six or seven feet above the ground, and long poles are lashed down along the edges of the four sides. Upon these the dancers perform their slow jerky dance. At each jump or jerk forward the *leko* man also jerks his arms upwards from the elbow.

Now that the crowd is not so great round the platform, and *leko* is having a rest, we will take a nearer view of him. The most striking part of the get-up is the huge wig of the plumes of the bird-of-paradise sewn in tiers to a "tall hat" composed of the sheathing of the coconut leaf. These beautiful

plumes, of a rich brown, stand up and lean down all over the man's head, so that the eyes are almost covered. His body is oiled and painted bright red with a mixture made of crushed berries. He wears a huge perineal band of beaten bark, with long dependent ends in front, and fastened to a waistband of finely plaited black fibre from inland. Suspended from his neck by a necklace of red shell discs is a large white shell ornament. Bunches of cassowary feathers are stuck into his armlets, from which hang long crinkled white leaf streamers. Similar white bands are tied ound his ankles and just below the knees. All traces of hair are removed from his person. In his right hand he carries a long carved and decorated piece of wood (*iaviri*) with central handle; white leaf streamers hang along its whole length. At each step in the dance it is jerked upwards.

He came into the village from nature's dressing-room, roofed with beautiful growing palm leaves; his helpers drummed him in as he did his jerky "one step"; young women done up in their gayest followed close on his heels. As he ascended the platform a party broke through the crowd with a shout and threw down a great screaming pig, and stuck the poor brute there and then. The *leko* was started in real earnest.

I have no doubt in my own mind that this particular dance is a mimicry of the bird-of-paradise in his dancing tree at mating time. Once, inland, I spent two hours under such a tree, in which there must have been at least a score of pairs of these gorgeous birds. Ever since I saw this privileged performance in nature's theatre I have been able to appreciate better its wonderful reproduction in the *Govi*.

As the *leko* entered at one part, so in the near and farther distance the several drummings of the other parties approaching could be distinguished, until in a few minutes the village street rang with song and bobbed from end to end with a moving mass of dancers and brilliant colours. In its surroundings nothing seemed gaudy or out of harmony. Hundreds of eager onlookers filled all available space on the ground. The drabness of village surroundings and village life was lost.

The *dauge* parties were beautifully befeathered, and

entered the village behind mat screens, which were lowered as soon as they reached the street. They, too, danced their way in, crouching low, one behind the other, preceded in each case by their leader dancing backwards. The crouching step, as well as the song, is quick and jerky, but full of go; this dance is taken, I think, from lessons given by the bird-of-paradise. It hails from inland, and is sometimes associated with fighting. Each of the performers bites the *toru*.[1] Sometimes, too, the decapitating knife of bamboo is suspended from the back of the neck. I was present on one occasion when real business was meant. The parties behind the screens were led by a man carrying in his hand sixteen-foot spears. He and they advanced in the ordinary crouching attitude, but in this case they made it express diabolical defiance and blood lust, and as his party came forward, the leader brandished one of his spears from side to side. But that story comes later.

We are writing now of a peaceful *dauge* at the *Govi* festival.

The *bara* dance, nowadays very popular, hails from near Kerepunu. It consists of different figures and formations. Much of it is danced by two lines of men facing one another, alternately dropping and straightening their knees in time with the drumming, while those at the ends of the lines take it in turn to dance down the centre, facing now to this side and now to that. The want of variety and tone in the song and drumming makes it uninteresting to me, but it is fascinating as a display of colour and rhythm. All the evening and on through the night, with short intervals for breathing, the *leko* dancer goes round his platform; the crouching *dauge* comes up and down the street; the *damorea* women, looking seriousness itself, reiterate their monotonous song and step; and the quick drumming of the *bara* keeps up an almost continuous racket. If there is no moon large fires are kindled to give light.

I have gone to the village in the early morning following, and I can recommend the sight to anyone who wants to catch the "after-the-ball-is-over" expression on savage faces. Perspiration has come through the paint and caused it to run down; the croton leaves are faded and bruised; the teased-out hair is now bedraggled and has lost its

feathers; streamers have been torn from arms and legs, and match no longer; everyone looks sorry for himself. Many of the younger folk can be seen fast asleep on the sand beach with the blanket of sunshine getting hotter and hotter upon their reeking bodies.

The older men, however, are busy fairly early, trying to get what help they can to bring in the coconuts and collect the hundreds of bundles of sago sausages, sour or otherwise. The *bara* erection of poles, hung with great numbers of bunches of *moe* bananas, is stripped of its burden, and, when sufficiently recovered, the young men sweat in the stuffy street as, under orders from the *gubinas*, they distribute the food into the hundred or more *dubus*.

The village has now become a huge slaughter-house: pigs are rapidly and proudly cut up by fathers-in-law galore, dance leaders and feast masters; the air reeks of hot blood. The masters shout out the names of the different *dubus*, and representatives rush in and carry off their shares. The village from end to end is covered with rubbish, dirt and smell. No sooner are the *dubus* carried off than visitors from a distance pull up sail and set off home. Widows and widowers are satisfied; many debts are paid, though many more have been incurred. Social organization and custom are satisfied for a time. Religious feeling has vanished. Economics has got what it wanted from religion, and now religious feeling can take a rest.

The village is more than drab now. Each *Govi* master takes down the *ailopulopu* pole from the centre of its platform, chops it into short lengths and presents it, with the bits of mango branch wrapped up, to whomsoever he thinks should be next in turn to conduct a *Govi*. Public opinion is so powerful that the nominee hardly dares to refuse, and, bemoaning his fate, he deposits the relics for safe keeping in the upper recesses of his house, until he shall receive the *Ilara* stone and make the first fire. Thus, after all, the unbroken *Govi* succession is maintained, and religious feeling is somehow allowed to flicker on.

The mourning periods for those concerned are now over; having received the full rites that custom demands as their due, the ancestral spirits have departed to the spirit land. The last signs of mourning have been cut away from

neck and arms and wearing apparel. Dreams are of a different character now. The village has become intensely drab, and the story of the *Govi* doings is soon stale. Nature demands the common round, the daily quest for food—minus inspiration.

NOTE

[1] See p. 203.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Magic & Spells

AS a prefatory word to a difficult chapter I want to state a few strong impressions left on my mind after a long residence with these people in more or less daily contact with nearly every phase of their lives.

The first is that an individual psychology among them seems so insignificant that it hardly calls for comment. The psychology of our people is a mass or social psychology. An individual mind seems only interpretable in terms of the social organization.

Another strong impression is the prominent position which awe takes on their mental platform. This may seem strange to many who have met the Papuo-Melanesians of this coast and who often regard them as stolid, immovable, taking everything for granted. Boys who have been taken down to Sydney and shown what their introducers imagined would be amazing sights are said to have shown no surprise. Personally I think that awe has much, if not everything, to do with this apparent lack of wonder. Awestruck before any experience of which he cannot grasp the meaning or reason, the native has the power of throwing it off entirely as something beyond him, something that has never entered into the social psychology of his ancestors, something belonging to another mental world which he need not worry about. Sickness, childbirth, death, the "unknown," *within* his native community, these are altogether different. Evolved custom or habit often seems to take the place of any other thinking machine. If, as someone has said, the psychology of conduct consists of the "kingdom of habit" and the "kingdom of reflection," then among our people it is the former which is developed as the stabilizing agency, evolved to maintain the mental equilibrium of the community.

Individual reflection would be suspected as dangerous, if not actually anti-social. The evolved result of a social

reflection on the crises of life is expressed in "custom," which psychologically becomes the safeguard of the well-being of the people. Outside their own social psychology there are no seven-days' wonders; within their own social psychology, that which awakens surprise is always a seven-days' wonder.

A third impression is the clumsy way our people mix up cause and effect and their often erroneous association of ideas. As a teacher of savage youth I have found this the great stumbling block, and as an observer of their social customs have always felt it to be the reason for their rigid conservatism. The consent and custom of the social psychology of ancestors are the final court of appeal for our primitive Mailu mentality.

Again, there is the easy way in which our social psychology attributes to the superhuman or supernatural that which is mysterious or abnormal. For example, although the sorcerer is spoken of as no more than human, he is yet in touch with and can call forth a mysterious and mystic power.

I find it difficult to dissociate magic from their primitive religion. In the same way I always find it difficult to dissociate the *vara egi* (medicine-man) from the *barau egi* (sorcerer). My experience is that to the *vara* man's clan or community he is a *vara* man, but to another clan or community he is a *barau egi*, and vice versa. The *vara* man's duty is to make ineffective the anti-social evil influence of the *barau egi*. The efficacy of the power of each is dependent on the secret mystic spell (*uura* = prayer) he owns and practises, and on the strict observance of tabu (*sora*) against certain eatables to preserve the effectiveness of the spell.

I am not laying down these impressions as working hypotheses for what follows. They are merely given here as gathered through the years; nor will they be taken, I hope, as begging any particular question.

One afternoon at the Government gaol at Abau in the Mailu district I watched the prisoners' "cooky boy," himself a prisoner, clearing up after the evening meal. Those who had partaken of that meal of rice had come from every part of the district, inland and coastal. "Cooky" himself had had his meal with the others and now, collecting as many as possible of the grains they had let fall, he was mixing

them up. These and the leavings he wrapped in some big leaves, went down the steep slope of the hill and threw them into the sea. Apparently he mixed them so that they might not be recognized again by a sorcerer as the leavings of any one individual, especially, of course, of himself.

On another occasion, when I was starting a new mission station on the mainland, I watched my small boy-attendant take his plate of cooked food and go to four different spots, each some distance from the last. At each spot he ate a bit and hurried off with his plate to places where he thought he could not be seen. How many other spots he went to I do not know. I learned subsequently that he was afraid that some sorcerer would see him if he remained eating long in one spot, and after he had gone would work magic on any crumbs he might have dropped.

I sent my mission boys out recently to make sago. As it was planted, and therefore owned, I supplied the boys with the regular price for the palms, which was usually accepted without demur. But by their industry my boys got much more sago out of the palm than the native generally does. This made the owner, a *barau egi*, most indignant, and as there was likely to be a row, one of my Papuan teachers went across to remonstrate with him. After the teacher left him, the man took his little bamboo bottle (*orau*) containing leaves and, armed with another leaf, picked up some of the sand from one of my man's footprints, mixed the sand with a bit of the dried leaves from his *orau* and retired into the privacy of his house, where he placed the packet on the fire, while he uttered or sang his spell. By rights, of course, my teacher should have been taken violently ill and died. It is needless to say he did not.

In parts of the mainland magical power may be conveyed to a certain tree by a magic ceremony and spell. If anyone passes that tree so that the wind blows from it to him, or if its shadow falls on him, or even upon his shadow, it means disease and death. From these few instances it will be seen how our natives believe that what has once been associated or come in contact with a man can be treated magically with the same effect as such treatment would have upon his actual person.

I have found this to hold good on the mainland with

regard to hair clippings and nail parings, but never on Mailu Island, except that those who in mourning shave the hair completely, collect it carefully, wrap it in leaves and bury it.

A short time ago I was informed that to entrap and operate on the soul of a man working in his garden the *barau* man silently approached him. The *barau* man had plucked a couple of leaves in readiness and had placed between them in the palm of his hand a pinch of the magical leaves from his *orau* (bamboo phial). Approaching his victim unseen, by a sudden shout he startled the soul (*iau*) out of his body and at the same time entrapped it by quickly closing his two hands together. Then he folded up the leaves carefully and carried off the packet to a private spot where he could go through his incantation and make his magic effective.

It is hardly to be wondered at if the natives live in mortal fear of these anti-social beings. If they killed people from other villages who trespassed on land belonging to a community, or intruded carelessly into another community's club-house, the reason was not so much fear of theft as fear of sorcery.

For the deadly forms of magic the sorcerer chews pepper, the hottest kind of leaf, cinnamon bark, or wild ginger root, which imparts heat or power (*odaoda*) to him. After uttering his own particular incantation he spits out upon the object—a tree, a knot, a leaf, a corpse, or an entrapped soul, etc.

One malignant form of magic to protect from theft economic plants, such as coconut or betel-nut palms, is known as *onaga*. The following was given me by a magician who had just taught it to his son.

He prepared a long string consisting of lengths of vine stalk tied together, with which to encircle his small patch of betel-nut palms; the sign was to be a *gora* (tabu) on them. He took his son to a quiet bit of the beach near his land, where they would not be disturbed, and having doubled the vine into a loop, got his son to hold one end of it, while he held the other. The old man then ceremonially chewed a wild species of areca-nut (*akai*), betel leaves and stalk (*arava*), and bit off a piece of wild ginger (*siwowa*). He took strands of tall rank grass (*nabuna*) and showed his son how to tie the ends of them in knots at intervals all round the loop. His son worked from one point and he

from the opposite one. As each end of grass was knotted to the vine he repeated an incantation and anointed each knot with saliva (*kusiva*), saying to his son: "You 'spell' (*uurai*) that side while I spell this." The 'spell' was as follows:—

"*Moda ni ena ura de vauurai.*"
"*Moda*" (a tree) "on his knot cause to 'spell.'"
"*Dubuna ena ura de vauurai.*"
"*Dubuna*" (another tree) "on his knot cause to 'spell.'"
"*Araga ena ura de vauurai.*"
"*Araga*" (another tree) "on his knot cause to 'spell.'"
"*Toua nina ei mudai oniba!*"
"*Toua*" (ancestral name) "sun rise!"
"*Ade adei aiba o!*"
"*Ade*" (a piece of land) "Mother, come!"
"*Ababai aiba, o!*"
"Father, come!"

This spell is used by this individual upon betel-nut and coconut palms, and the vine that produces fish poison. To make the spell effective, the owner has to refrain (*sora*) from eating certain poor kinds of fish. The same old man once said to me: "Oh, So-and-so is nobody; he eats any kind of fish or crustacean."

The effects of *onaga* upon the trespasser or thief is that he comes out in sores all over his body and dies of the disease, unless he is fortunate enough to get another man, or the same man, to counteract the effect by new magic.

One such counteracting and healing spell given me by a sorcerer himself is the following:—

"*Au wuwurisaukamu.*"
"Foot I blow on thee."
"*Mogu omou ma wuwurisaukamu.*"
"? ? I blow on thee."
"*Turuna ena bo de wuwurimoruisaukamu.*"
"At base of knee I blow on thee to subside."

In the above case the magician spits on the swelling and it subsides (*moruisa*). This good man fasts from six kinds

of fish, two kinds of vegetables, and two kinds of bananas, which means that he has to eat the best of everything!

I may as well say here, without anticipating, that charms seem to be little used among the ordinary people, but such men as those mentioned above rarely go about without their *iapa* (medicine) to counteract the effect of black magic either on themselves or on others to whom they may be called.

The two forms of magic most feared by our people to-day, as in the past, are that of the *barau egi* and that of *Karaveni* (a sorceress). The commonest belief with regard to the *barau egi* is that he points his "leaves" at his victims mostly when it is dark; the victim falls down and suffers only slight pain then: he tells his friends that he tripped over something. Meanwhile *barau* has gone back to his house and got a bit of old broken pot, on to the convex side of which he presses the leaves he pointed at his victim, and as he does so he holds it over the fire and chants the spell which is to bring about death. In the victim's house the pain increases in direct proportion and at exactly the same time as the pressure on the leaves is increased. The action of the magic here is telepathic. The watchers over the victim pronounce the disease and the pain to be the work of *barau*, test the sufferer with food, and publish abroad in the village that he is dying. Should *barau* continue to use pressure on the leaves the victim dies. He himself, however, is probably called to go and see the sick man, for the last thing any man would do, even if sick unto death, would be to accuse any particular *barau* openly. Nor would his friends. It becomes then largely a matter of pay. When this is forthcoming, the *barau* becomes the kindly disposed *vara* man and the patient recovers—sometimes—sometimes he does not! All sickness and death is attributed to *barau* or *Karaveni*. *Baraus* are dreaded as thieves and adulterers. They can creep into places impossible for any ordinary being and can extract anything they like without being seen. The woman, other than his own wife, with whom *barau* has connection, dies very soon afterwards.

Karaveni is a sorceress. I do not think she is a production of this district, but originates in the East. Yet there are *karavenis* here. The natives say that the body of a *kavaveni*

is wrapped by herself in mats and goes to sleep, and at night she flies with another body. She eats the liver and insides of men and returns to her house. If it is one of her own people whom she has made sick, she will take a bit of the insides that she has already extracted and hidden and put it back in the body—that is to say, "if the sufferer is one she feels sorry for." After *Karaveni* has washed her hands in the sea, the sick one recovers. After one of her trips she comes back and creeps into her rolled mat again, then uncovers herself and lights a bit of coconut-leaf. People in other houses say: "Oh, she has come back again, there's light in the house." In the evening all *Karaveni* women bake coconut-shell till it glows, and swallow the still glowing charcoal. Then, after lying down and covering themselves up, they go off again, and the embers they have eaten burst out as light. This lighted body flies away like a star, and hence a falling star is always spoken of as *Karaveni* flying to some village, and "to-morrow we shall hear of someone dead there," for that was the direction of her flight.

Also after a falling star, if a man who has been east is sick and in pain, others say that he has not paid for the armshells he brought back and that *Karaveni* has taken out some of his insides. The relatives of the sick man stand up and go from side to side defiantly addressing *Karaveni*: "I will pay you for your armshells, make my brother better. Here's your pig. I'll pay you, make my brother better." If *Karaveni* is appeased, she takes a bit of flesh and puts it back on the sore spot and the sick one recovers.

My sorcerer friend (I do not mention his name, for he is still alive) says he got this information from descendants of his relatives who lived at Gadaisu.

As we have seen in previous chapters, harmless private magic is also extensively employed: sleeping over leaves to induce dreams and visions; love-making magic; magic to impart sleep in the absence of one who has been accustomed to sleep in the house, etc. A great deal of this private magic is of a homœpathic nature, and consists of the uttering of spells upon the suckers or roots to be planted when gardening. I cannot find that there is a great deal of ceremony connected with it. One such, for example, is the

banana-growing spell. Taking the suckers from the village to the garden, and having dug the hole, the native holds the sucker in front of his face, chews ceremonially, and chants the following spell to it, with his head moving from side to side as though to encourage the plant to grow:—

"*E, boleilele, bareilele, avara garu, idamonamonasiaiba, bodea garu, idaenaenasiaiba.*"

After uttering the spell he spits on the sucker, sets it up in the hole and pulls the earth around the butt. *Boleilele* refers to the westerly blackness when the monsoon is blowing strong; the *bareilele* refers to the south-east blackness when that wind is blowing strong; the admonition to the plant is that it stands beautifully (*idamonamona*) during the strong winds. The possessor of that spell uses it also for planting his taro.

Another such spell, owned by a woman, appeals to numerous prominent hill landmarks along the coast, and mentions all the different kinds of taro. She chants this spell after planting her taro tops, when the leaves are beginning to open out and form shade round the expected tuber. She scratches away some of the earth from the butt and utters the spell that the earth may remain cool and that the tuber may be a large one. Pretty much the same performance is gone through in planting sweet potatoes, yams, sugar-cane or any garden produce. The spells are secret and the occasion sacred, as is almost invariably the case with things associated with the getting of food. For fishing, hunting and net spells I must ask the reader to refer to earlier sections, also for public magic connected with getting wealth, pig magic, armshell magic, and fine weather magic. Spells are broken by their disclosure to any outside the true family line. They are strictly secret and depend largely upon their secrecy for the mystery attaching to them. Spells are also broken by the wilful or involuntary breaking of the tabu or fast (*sora*) with which they are always associated, or even by coming into contact with the taint of the tabued food.

A word must be said about divination.

We have already come across it in its most serious form in part of the mourning and burial ceremony. Divination

is known among our people as *waga*. It is employed in hunting and fishing and upon all critical occasions when there is doubt as to the issue. Whenever the *gauma* fishing-net or the hunting-net (*loa*) is used, divination is employed by a priest to discover anyone likely to bring them ill luck through having broken some public tabu. If discovered, he is asked not to accompany them, and is mentioned as spirit-possessed or indwelt by the offended spirit of a deceased person.

They divine also the particular spot where fish or game is to be got. The diviner mentions different parts of the reef, or different hills in the bush, till the oracle speaks—*i.e.* till the stick or the leaves move. The method employed is briefly as follows. If an answer is sought before setting out, two men accompanied by a priest resort to an unfrequented part of the beach, generally under a tree, and with light grasp the two men hold horizontally between them a short stick, over the centre of which some leaves or a twig are suspended. After ceremonial chewing the priest then addresses the stick in a solemn manner—it is a sacred moment to them—pretty much to this effect:

"Are you there?" (repeated several times).

"We are going to such-and-such a place," mentioning the name (this repeated several times).

"We are going fishing" (repeated).

"Shall we get fish?" (repeated again and again).

If there is no movement (*waga*) of the leaves or stick, the priest continues, or may even say definitely: "We won't go to-day."

Upon movement of the stick and leaves, in response to his questions, the priest at once says "*Boisiau*" ("Let's be off").

In such divination it is the spirit of a person more or less recently deceased that is addressed.

The divination carried out on a canoe when they have the *gauma* net on board I have related under the heading of nets and fishing; it is of such importance to the community that it is better told in that place. Suffice it therefore to say that in that case the address is made to the net, which becomes to all intents and purposes a spiritual person, in the shape of the owner's ancestor after whom the net is

named, and who in that particular family was the first to make a *gauma*.

We have seen also how reflections in a bowl of water are used by a *vara* man to determine the likelihood of the recovery of a sick person. Similarly a water-bottle suspended from the middle of a stick is used to divine the chance of catching dugong.

In the old days, for warfare and for the undertaking of great expeditions, divination was not employed, but magic, spells or prayers. The same now applies to intended expeditions. From beginning to end of Mailu native life runs the dread of ill luck, individual and social. I think that it is Mr Marett who points out how in savage communities fear of ill luck may become a panic and how a panic may be a disastrous thing to the community. Nothing can more nearly express the actual state of psychological affairs within the Mailu community. Its whole mental life is permeated with the " Touch wood ! " feeling. A civilized sailor may be a past master at avoiding passengers' questions as to coming weather or time of reaching port, but he has a savage sailor brother who can put him in the shade. I think it is the same with them as with the sailor, the dread of the word expressed and the ill luck it may bring.

CHAPTER XXIX

Tabu

The Definition of Various Forms of Tabu Signs—Breaking the *Neburu* Tabu & its Penalty—The Spirit-possessed Man Spirit Expulsion Ordeal—Tabus on Various Foods—Tabus & Spells, Prayers—Tabus observed by Various Persons—Tabus on Names & Individuals—Custom

IT will not be necessary to do more in this chapter than to summarize the various forms of tabu to which I have referred already.

To avoid any possibility of ill luck—that is, any disturbance of the normal life, or ill success in the food quest—the Mailu social organization arms itself with a ritual of avoidance, commonly called "Tabu."

Mr R. R. Marett, in his text-book on *Anthropology*, defines tabu as being "anything that one must not do lest ill luck befall."

The word occurs in the Mailu language in such forms as "*tabutabu*"=to choose, and "*tabuai*"=sacred.

Our Southern Massim neighbours to the east have the word in a form which Mailu does not possess—for example, *tabu* with them means distinctly "do not!"—*tabu u lau*="don't you go."

To express all that Mr Marett's definition might include, the Mailu native has several terms: *tabuai*, sacred; *gora*, forbidden; *neburu*, a word unrelated to any other ritual or tabu than that to which it is specifically applied; *kisa neburu*, an extension of the *neburu*; *sora*, fast; and *liai*, which, for want of a better English term, I will call "avoidance."

Tabuai (sacred), although implying "tabued," cannot be employed universally. All tabued objects, food or persons are not necessarily *tabuai*.

The burial place of a man is *tabuai*; people will never walk over a grave, but round it at a distance, and even the chief mourners respectfully keep their vigil a little way from the grave. Passers-by speak in low tones, if at all.

I have heard widows and widowers described as *tabuai*. They are rarely approached, and if addressed, the same murmuring tone is adopted by the visitor and by themselves. Our friends the *gabugabu* men at the last preparation for the *Govi* festival are *tabuai*. As we have seen, they are allowed to eat only roasted food, and on no account to come in contact with women. The house or houses of their vigil are also *tabuai*. And our old friend the *uisari* man is *tabuai*, as he sleeps over his dream-giving leaves and keeps his lonely vigil to ensure the getting of pigs for the festival.

But in the case, say, of childbirth, although the woman observes tabus on certain food, according to the best native authorities she is not *tabuai*.

The term *gora* is applied not only to that which is tabued but also to any sign erected for the tabu, particularized by the prefixing of a term to describe what *gora* it is.

To save repetition of what has gone before, I will merely classify the various *goras* and briefly state their meanings.

A *gora* affects the public, the community. The rude sign generally consists of two uprights with a bar across, and when crinkled streamers of young coconut leaves and coconut husks are suspended from it, it is *ama gora* (coconut tabu); the same hung with parts of the areca-nut palm is *ueni gora* (betel-nut tabu).

Tona gora we are acquainted with—the tabu sign for all nuts preparatory to a big *Govi* festival. It takes the form of a long upright pole with two arms or branches tied at an angle pointing upwards. It is decorated with the crinkled young leaves of the coconut and also with the husk.

The *moto gora*, already fully described, is a sign of the tabu on armshells; and the white cowrie shells tied to the *gora* are signs that the person who ties them will bring a pig or pigs to the master of that part of the festival.

All these *goras* are erected with a ritual of spells and saliva-anointing.

The great majority of tabus have reference to the vital question of food, and the spells are intended to secure abundance.

Private individuals put *goras* on their coconut and betel-nut palms; very often it is seen on a single palm, and consists of a split leaf of that kind of palm tied round the

trunk. Those who happen to possess the magic spell for *onaga* practise it when tying on this *gora*, so that any trespasser who attempts to climb the tree, and therefore passes over the *gora*, may come out in sores and swellings, and die.

Goras are also placed in gardens on the mainland to protect various garden products; these *goras* are the primitive counterpart of the ugly notice-board of civilization: "Trespassers will be Prosecuted. By Order of ——."

The private protective *goras*, however, are not to be confused with the individual and social tabus practised as prophylactics against the disease of ill luck.

The most sacred of these is the *neburu* tabu. It is a tabu on the nuts growing on that part of the late owner's land where he is buried. The grave and the mortuary hut stand as the tabu signs, and are considered sufficient, as the spirit of the deceased is reckoned quite capable of watching over his own nuts.

The breaking of *neburu* tabu is followed by absolute ill luck in fishing. The tabu is placed upon the nuts to ensure the spirit's good will while they are fishing. I mentioned in the previous chapter how divination is employed to discover the offending party who is "spirit-indwelt."

It is interesting to notice that this man is spoken of sympathetically and is allowed to enjoy the "catch," and that instead of being directly accused in the village of having broken a tabu, it is left for a ritual occasion and a semi-religious court to bring the charge home. It has often seemed to us that public sympathy went out towards the offender and public resentment towards the one finding him out or showing indignation against him. It seems to us part of their upside-down way of looking at things. Hence I think it is left to a spiritual court to prove guilt. To get rid of this spirit the people employ a ceremony of purification, the only such ceremony I have discovered here. After a time the man will ask once more to accompany his fellows *doa la*—that is, "*ume* fishing." Having expressed his wish "*ia gabununuiselaisi boi kokoaiselaisi*"—that is, "to go through the fumigation and be rid of the spirit"—some of his friends make the necessary preparations.

The ceremony is called the *boi onivara bega*—spirit-banishing leaf. Two or three friends take the man into the

bush and collect leaves from one or more trees: *one*, *orooroa*, *oroorau* and *darana*. Scrapings of coconut kernel are pounded up with the leaves, made into a ball and placed on a stone over a small fire. As soon as the greasy concoction begins to smoulder it is collected in a coconut shell and the man is made to bend down over it, with a mat thrown over his head so that he gets the full benefit of the fumes; he then has to anoint his body with scraped coconut and go to bathe in the sea, using scraped coconut again as soap. After that he is told he can accompany them on their next *ume*-catching excursion, and if they are then successful he may continue to go as of yore.

After the *neburu*-tabued coconuts have been eaten at the *Govi* festival, the same coconut-palms are tabued again by *kisa neburu* (bone tabu). This prohibits any gathering from these palms until a small coconut "feast" is held to celebrate the final burial of the skull. As the skulls are not now dug up, the *kisa neburu* is no longer enforced. On the mainland, in the old days, I often came across skulls, which, instead of being buried again, were set to watch over the deceased's palms on a well-kept bit of the ground under them. This custom is no longer allowed.

Another class of tabu is that called *sora*. It is an individual tabu put on certain foods. I translate the word as "fast." There is no social *sora*. It is put on inferior kinds of fish and vegetables by persons who are the owners of spells, the effectiveness of which is dependent on the permanent observance of the *sora*.

The *gara gubina*, or war master, was never allowed to eat, or get tainted with, certain fish, crustaceans and vegetables. The success and the lives of the warriors depended on the spell that he pronounced as he waved his wand upon the spears and shields.

The various masters of feasts have not only to observe their customary *soras*, but others are also imposed for the occasion. When, upon coming back from a head-hunt, the manslayers were secluded for three or four days, they could eat only roasted food—that is, for the time being they became *gabugabu* men. So also with our *gabugabu* men of to-day, who go into seclusion after the *Kanare* feast.

Boys in the *dubus* at initiation time were forbidden to eat

any boiled food and had to observe any *sora* associated with that crisis in their lives.

For a month after childbirth a woman has to refrain from eating fish or flesh, or the cord will not come away properly from the child. She must on no account allow a drop of her milk to fall on the fire, or the child's stomach will swell and death will probably ensue.

A woman must have nothing to do with the preparation of food and cooking when she is making a pot, lest the pot get tainted with food by her hands. In this case the danger would be that someone's spell would become ineffective.

The man who owns the wealth spell must exercise extreme care lest its effect be lost for ever by the breaking of the *sora* he has learned from his forbears. Wealth means pigs, and pigs mean not only food but also the perpetuation of ancient marriage rites and ritual.

The sorcerer fasts from numbers of things to enhance the effect of his occult power and to preserve his spell unbroken.

The *vara*, or medicine man, has to observe strictly the *sora* his spell demands. The lives of many in the village depend on this. At some time he may be required to lead a man or a party into a strange village, where only his occult power can counteract any occult power possessed by men in that village. Only a short time ago a man brought home a great pig, which he failed to buy with money and New Guinea wealth, but which was handed over to him at once upon his professing to be able to counteract any sorcerer's power that might bring ill luck on their village.

The owners of big nets (*gauma*) for catching *ume* or dugong have to recognize that the breaking of their *sora* would mean no *umes* or dugong. The same holds good, of course, for possessors of food spells, gardening spells, sleep spells, coconut and betel-nut spells, "absent one" spells, etc.; they must rigidly observe the appropriate tabus.

My old friends in the village, men who as boys were initiated into manhood in the ancient and proper manner, and who themselves have taken part in raids, tell me that after slaying their man, warriors used to wash themselves in the nearest water, lest the taint of his blood should remain on them; otherwise they might become suffused in their

own bodies with the dead man's blood and get bad swellings in the groin (*gorau*).

Villagers do not like a stranger to enter the village unbidden or unconducted; they are afraid lest his shadow (*iau*) may fasten itself upon them (*sinidaba*). If the *gobu egi* (war master) of another village wished to come to Mailu, one of the *gobu* men on Mailu would go to meet him before he entered the village. In the old days, before entering a strange village, they anointed their bodies with scraped coconut and leaves, lest a sorcerer there might look enticingly upon them (*orimonamona taguru de*).

Even now they do not like eating before strangers, or indeed before some people of their own village; in the old days they entirely refrained from doing so (*isiisi seilagu taguru de*) (some refrain still) lest the soul of another should help them to eat the food. They reckon that if another man's soul should eat with them they would get sick and die. Nor will they eat before a sorcerer for fear of his shadow (*iau*).

The possessors of spells all eat their food out of their own special pots unless the other people's *soras* are the same as their own; they sit slightly apart from others because they are *sora emegi* (fast men). While eating they turn their backs on others, lest the steam or smell from the pots of those who eat anything without limitation should come over to them and their pot. When we have village men working for us it is quite common for them to come and ask for new pots, that their food may be untainted.

The last form of tabu that I mention is that of *liai*. As we have seen, this is a tabu on the names and persons of certain individuals who are kin. It is just one of those things governing the conduct and etiquette of the community which we civilized persons comprehend so slowly and are inclined to think not worth while. I remember reading somewhere of a child asking her teacher why a bride always wore white on her wedding day. The teacher's reply was not bad: "Because it is the happiest day of her life." The little one's second question was: "Then why does a bridegroom always wear black?" We stick tenaciously to trivial customs for fear of infringing some law of social etiquette; why should we scoff at the savage for observing certain customs, for the use of which he probably has just as good

grounds, perhaps better. If a Mailu person says from a distance to one who is *liai* to him, " Here is your food," and receives the reply, " Yes, you get out of the way somewhere first, and I will come and take it," or if a brother-in-law meets his sister-in-law in the path and she shoots off into the bush to avoid him, it is only like Mr Punch's fashionably dressed lady who gets a frightful shock because *the gent* has come to meet her in the " Row " in *shorts*.

The savage is trying to work out his own salvation. In more senses than one his daily struggle is to keep body and soul together. The social mentality of his past has been searching for a best to suit each successive stage of existence.

The savage does not act without reason; as a matter of fact he has his reason for practically everything he does. He cannot always give it, because it is a social concern; the mentality, the psychology is social: it is the community that speaks; the mind of the savage Mailu man is the evolved mind of the social order.

CHAPTER XXX

Dreams & Spirits

Dreams—Shadows—Reflections—Ghosts—Tabued Pools of Water—Doctrine of Souls—Belief in Spirits

HE is a clever man who can understand the Mailu man on his material side; but I do not know how to describe the individual who can understand his spiritual side. The unfortunate thing is that the Mailu man cannot himself describe the movements of his spirit.

Our primitive man here is bowled over by the strange, the uncanny, and the intangible. His reality *is* real to him. He has experienced, therefore "it" (whatever the "it" may be) is real to him. He has experienced dreams, for instance. Those voices he has heard in his sleep can only be associated with voices he has heard when awake. They are the voices of those in the spirit world communicating with him. Or they are the voices of men still alive heard in sleep. That is always an omen that the speakers will shortly die, unless efforts are put forward to save them, for the soul of the man heard must have left his body to communicate with another in sleep. A man once told me that he was awakened one night by someone saying to him: "Are you there, Dini?" He said he rose and got a light, but could see no one and said to himself: "Oh, I have heard So-and-so's voice, he will get sick to-morrow." Dini kept this to himself until the owner of the voice did get sick, and he then told his relatives to seek the advice of the medicine man at once, as he had heard his voice in his sleep.

Years ago Dini's relative at Gogosiba showed him there a leaf of a certain tree, and told him that by that leaf he would see spirits and have dream sleep (*nivi ui*). When Dini came back from Gogo he found these same leaves growing on Mailu, plucked one, and before going to sleep rubbed it on his eyes that he might have visions of those who might address him. He never threw the leaf away,

but put it under his sleeping-mat, and he saw the visions distinctly! This custom is called *orogogo*. One day after telling the "master of the leaf" (*bega gubina*) that he was given to this practice, he found that the leaf had gone. Neither he nor anyone else had seen the leaf removed by the *bega gubina*.

I am told that dreams inspired in this fashion are a true revelation and lead also to the finding of lost or stolen property and to the discovery of the thief. They tell me I must distinguish between such dreams and ordinary dreams, some of which are true and some untrue. Or, as one man said to me, "If I should find that an ordinary dream came true, I would say that I dreamed it was going to happen so; if unconfirmed, I should say, 'I only dreamed it!'" Fairly safe, this!

Take as another example our *bega uisari egi* (sleeping-over-leaves man), tabued in some villages right up to the hilt, so that he emerges from his lonely vigil an emaciated man, whom nothing and no one, especially women, must interrupt in the communication to him through dreams of the good will of ancestral spirits towards the getting of pigs for the feast.

Notice also again the name given for the first night after the erection of the *Moto badi gora* in front of the next *Govi* master's house—the dream-sleep night—dreaming of pigs, that is to say! To primitive Mailu man dreams are an experience, and therefore a part of his Reality.

In sleep (*uiui*) the soul (*iau*) naturally leaves the body and visits the home of spirits, ancestral spirits. They dislike and carefully refrain from waking a sleeper lest he may be roused before the soul gets back. The sleeper himself objects still more! Frequently I have had to awaken a sleeping sufferer myself to administer nourishment or medicine because I could not get a native to do it. Rather than disturb him they will let him go without nourishment altogether.

Similarly a man very much objects to being suddenly startled or surprised when awake. On such an occasion the startled man, if he says nothing stronger, will say, "My soul left me," or "You made my shadow (soul) go." We civilized beings say, "I was startled out of my wits," but

our Mailu people are at a stage when the expression *means* something to them.

A man's shadow is so associated with him that it possesses for him a spiritual significance. He cannot dissociate himself from his shadow (*iau*). They tell me that spirits (*boi*) are beyond their ken, that they belong, and have gone, to another world. Instead of speaking of a living man's soul as *boi* (spirit) they speak of it as *iau* (soul, shadow, shape, reflection). Though they speak of the life principle as *boi*, that expression is only used of spirits about to leave, or which have already left, the body in death.

At death the living soul (*iau*) becomes the living spirit, a spiritual being, as distinct from the spiritual inhabiting the natural body (*ubunu*).

The Mailu hill-folk on the mainland are afraid of the shadow of a sick man falling upon them or even falling upon their shadows, lest they too become sick and die. They also fear the shadows of mourners falling upon them. A great spirit of awe seems to possess them as they see a mourning procession passing. In the same way they are afraid of the shadow of a corpse falling on them or their shadows. We have seen already how the poles supporting the bier are as long as possible so that the shadow of the corpse shall not fall on those who are carrying it away for burial. None of these fears is shared by the near relatives of the deceased. They say: "Let the one who brought about death do his worst, we shall then be with the one we have lost."

Another fact which shows how little they can dissociate the shadow from the man himself is that, if persons are tabu (*liai*) through marriage relationships, their shadows are also tabu. But the avoidance of the shadow of one who is *liai* is nothing more than etiquette, and contact brings nothing more than shame and the possible wrath of the one whose *liai* was broken.

The word *iau*, or shadow, is further used almost in the sense of ghost, but it is the ghost of the living, not of the dead. Ghosts of the dead are apparently unknown to our people, at least I have never heard speak of them; but natives say that they have seen the *iau* of So-and-so in his garden, or in the bush, at a time when he was in the village. On one occasion a man told me that he and several others

were once in the bush and each of them saw a particular individual there; they returned to the village, and to the surprise of each found him sitting upon the verandah of his house. My informant told me that they questioned one another as to how he could have got back before them, till they realized that it must have been his *iau* they saw. He also told me that the man must have been sickening for a fatal disease, for the *iau* dissociated from its body is a presage of death.

Iau means also reflection in water, and we have mentioned that one who fails on several successive occasions to see his own reflection in the pool of water he is wont to frequent soon becomes disturbed in mind and goes off to inquire whether it has become visible to the *vara* man.

There are some pools of water, however, where it is highly dangerous to see one's own reflection. The *sosora*, or evil power presiding over the pool, works its evil will upon the reflection, so that the actual face is eaten away! One of my informants instanced one poor fellow I knew well whose face was actually eaten away by disease.

Natives who pass these streams turn their heads away lest they should see their reflections in the water.

Men and women who sometimes venture to fill their water-bottles at these places hold the bottle at arm's length and turn their heads away, unmindful, as the less daring say, of what grubs or small snakes may get in!

In this immediate district I know three such pools. One is Motodou at Aroana; another Lauilipa at Boioro; and another Gorasa at Dalava, a small stream. The following is their native history: "The owner of Lauilipa was one called Gauadeba, a real personality. A snake always lay in the pool. A Dalava man, called Ouru, came to Gauadeba once to beg for a snake because there was so much stealing from his garden at Dalava. Ouru slept at Gauadeba's place that night, and in the morning was asked if he had his net bag with him. He gave his bag to Gauadeba, and they two went in together to the place. Gauadeba called the snakes, and four came into the bag he was holding open; then he closed it up. As Ouru was carrying it along the coast to Dalava, two snakes came through the meshes of the bag and entered the *lai*, or patch of water, at Aroana, Motodou.

Ouru slept at Mogubo. As he continued his journey, one snake came out of the bag and entered into the headwaters of the creek at Mogubo. When he got to Dalava only the mother snake was in the bag. That he carried to his garden and hung near a banana bearing a ripe bunch. The thief came to the garden as before, stole some of the ripe fruit and ate it. He returned to his village and slept, but in the middle of the night his stomach swelled up, and after suffering great pain he died. Ouru took the bag with the snake in it and threw it into Gorasa. That is why Gorasa and the other waters are sacred."

Whenever Mailu men moor their canoes in strange places they always ask first where they can get drinking water. They are warned of those places that are sacred.

Ulcers and sores that will not heal are often attributed to *sosora* from pools. The shadows of certain trees are very much feared by the natives on the mainland, because they say they are the trees from which sorcerers get their leaves and that they have been magically treated to defend them against trespass. They describe a big circle when passing these trees. The shadow of such an object is spoken of as *memeru*, never as *iau* (soul).

There are dark holes of deep water in some of the reefs into which no Mailu men will venture after fish; in each case there is a huge stone overhanging the eerie depths. On the Arieu reef two of these holes are called Didinagura and Noganagura. *Nagura* means cold. Another rock, Dariabu, casting an uncanny shadow (*memeru*), is at Onibu in Table Bay.

I said above that in sleep the soul leaves the body and goes to the land of spirits, and I used the word "soul" because the native speaks of the danger of disturbing a man before the soul can get back properly. The word the native uses for soul in that connection is *iau*. He says that the life principle—that which gives us life (*maurisusuagiana*)—is *boi*, because as soon as the *boi* departs (*baevara*) from the body, death takes place. The natives say: "We know nothing of the nature of *bois*. They belong to another world."

"Some men," they say, "have been to this other world and reported to us concerning it. The souls of deceased men live there."

Our people associate the ceasing of the breath (*nena*) with the departure of the soul, and, as we have seen, tie a man (*nena badi* or *boi badi*) to keep the breath in his body; but breath is never spoken of otherwise than as physical. It has no spiritual significance, whereas the term *boi* has spiritual and no other significance.

I am told that those who had authoritative knowledge of the departed practised spiritualism and used the séance. These were the *wavesa* men and women. Although this practice had died out, it had a short but lively resurrection in that strange revival now known in Papuan history as the "Vailala Madness." This had its origin in parts of the Gulf of Papua, and even came down east as far as this district.

It is not within our scope here to go into the why and wherefore, and the results, good or bad (according to some anthropologists apparently only the latter), of the "Vailala Madness," nor to enter into the details of its manifestation in other parts. We can only state that in this district it was not attended by those signs which made men seem as though "possessed," a state that was locally described as "the head he go round."

In the Mailu district it took the ludicrous shape of an acknowledged attempt to usurp the personality and functions of his Majesty King George, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of Papua, and the officers. It appeared first in an entirely heathen village, seven miles in from the coast, Magori. The cult was brought along the coast to Magori by a man belonging to that village who had been "recruited" and worked in the Motumotu district. The doctrine he proclaimed was that the ancestors were coming back in the persons of the white people in the country, and that all the things introduced by the white people and the ships that brought them belonged really to their ancestors and themselves. He himself was King George and his friend was the Governor. "Geriso" (Christ) had given him this authority, and he was in communication with "Geriso" through a hole near his village, etc.

The natives were to fling off all signs of mourning. (This they actually did in some villages here.) They were to put away grief, deck themselves out with their finery

and feathers and wealth, sweep their villages and prepare to meet their ancestors, and pay taxes in future to these great men at Magori. (In a few cases they did this too.)

The invasion of this new cult into the Mailu district was promptly nipped in the bud, and "King George," "the Governor" and his private secretary were put in gaol! Boys indentured on some of the plantations ran off to their villages, and one white man wanted to know what I, the missionary, had been teaching the natives now!

The thing fizzled out, except for a temporary revival of the ancient custom of the séance and its practices, principally at Laruoro and Kurere. At Laruoro the "medium" was a woman, and at Kurere a man.

In both instances the procedure was much the same. At Laruoro on one occasion, after it had become dark, the word went round that no torches were to be lit on the reef, and the fires in the houses were to smoulder and not to be blown into flame; my Papuan teacher was told to put out the lamp in his house. The reason given was that the ancestors were expected that night, and that through a certain woman they would communicate with the people of the village if these came to her house. My teacher visited the house and found it full to overflowing with expectant people who were sitting silently in total darkness. After a short time he heard a muffled voice speaking to someone. This voice presently was heard to ask if So-and-so was present in the house, for her deceased son was speaking and desired food. The food was actually fetched and passed to the medium. Other requests from the dead were for armshells and native wealth, which the live relatives were asked to produce. After a while the teacher struck a match and saw a mass of mats and skirts which were apparently covering someone up. He removed these and recognized the woman, and asked her why she was collecting all that stuff for herself. The company dispersed. I have no doubt in my own mind that it was a crude performance compared with the manifestations of the old days. But it was interesting that what was asked for *was* produced. From what my boy tells me, there was a great air of expectancy and seriousness in that house.

The whole revival is to me of deep psychological interest;

it throws light on primitive man's mental attitude to the coming of white men into his country, to the sudden introduction of the white man's civilization in its varied forms, and to its untold wealth, knowledge and power. All this and much more has suddenly come in as a flood upon minds which have not had time to develop slowly and so to cope with the rush of new ideas pouring in. Native thought, often at bottom strongly imbued with ideas of reincarnation, could not but regard it all as an invasion of those who had lived the only life it knew in the haunts of the small world with which it was acquainted.

But the *wavesa* men and women (mediums) were not the only persons who could speak of the spirit world. There are certain individuals in every village who profess to have visited the haunts of departed spirits and to have met their departed ones. The natives say that their doctrine of the soul rests on the evidence given by these men as well as by the *wavesa* people.

These people do not constitute a class—it has been their accidental privilege. They are those who have been so seriously ill that they have been pronounced dead by those watching them. As soon as they rallied from the crisis they informed their people that they had been to Biula, and told them of all that occurred and all they had seen, and how they were driven back because there were too many there already.

In all seriousness, as befitted the occasion, Vaiori, an old man, told me that he visited Biula when he was suffering from shaking sickness (*goragora marai*).[1]

This is a literal translation:

"I went below at the end of the Morau section of the village. Below I saw a banana, it stood in the middle of the path, it was only trunk and leaves, it had no fruit. I put my left arm round the trunk. Leaving the banana I went along the village street. Going along, a man called Isari and another called Godila, the son of Toadae, I saw. They two called my father, a great call, 'Your son has come, come by mistake.' My father took a great spear, from inside the house, a good and terrible real fighting spear. He held it threatening me. My elder brother, called Mado, said to me, 'You stop here, because I have no other men with me,

we two will stop together, you don't go back.' My father said, 'No, he shall not stop here, go back up. His two younger brothers are there, he must go up again.' My father persisted in sending me back, and, because I was slow, my father got the big spear again and chased me. I ran and arrived at the big river in the midst of the village; on the bank I looked back, and my father threatened me. On the bank of the river there was a great lot of sweet potato growing, the high tide covered it, at low tide it appeared again. I ran across the river by the bridge. As I ran, one man called Owarea stood in my way and said, 'Good-bye!' Another called Gamuna stopped me and said, 'Go!' They two were gardening. Gamuna said, 'I thought you were going to stop, but you are going.' One man called Obaea said, 'Go! I have got little spears here.' Another man also, with whom he was fighting, his name was Boku. Boku said to me, 'Go!' They gave me no food. I came. I came up by the Bodeabo end of the village. The land of Biula is the same as this land."

Others have spoken of it as a land of plenty which good and bad alike inhabit.

A variant from another man was that a canoe was called for from the bank of the river where the banana stood; the relatives of the visitor responded to the call and paddled the spirit across.

One other account is that the soul leaving the body gets a canoe and paddles its way across the sea to the horizon, where it hangs a ladder from the edge and goes down into Biula.

The general view is that Biula is under the earth the people tread on. The soul finally takes up its abode in the land of spirits, and after the celebration of the *Govi* festival ceases to cause any anxiety or fear, except of an impersonal unrecognized individual character in the breasts of relatives.

The recently dead are feared, except by near relatives. Some say, however, that it is the evil power which has brought about death that causes the fear. I think it is largely fear of the dead. Anyhow the whole community betake themselves to their respective houses immediately after sundown on the day of burial, generally the same as that of death. In some cases the holes in the floor which give

access to the upper storeys are covered with boards, lest the spirit of the dead man should come up and try to carry off the souls of the inmates. As time advances after death the native mind gradually thinks less of the power of the dead to work evil. On ceremonial occasions, however, the spirits seem to be active again, and their goodwill and aid are more sought after.

So far as I can see, spirits are never deified. We have seen again and again how, by words or deeds, the natives express an inward fear lest the spirits of the dead should give them ill luck; this fear even appears in such an ordinary thing as the building or rebuilding of a house, when, while waiting for the completion of the thatch, they tie pronged fish-spears pointing skywards to ward off any ill-disposed spirit from bringing ill luck to the family hearth or giving the house a tilt.

I have never heard these people speak of a permanently good spirit.

NOTE

[1] Incidentally he said that when anyone suffers from this, men of the village come into the house or stand in the street and beat their drums and sing a song consisting only of *Oi! Oi! Oi! Oi! Oi! Ooi!* The song is called *Laige*.

CHAPTER XXXI

Religion

"As I passed by . . . I found an altar . . . to the unknown God"

PAUL

IF I have told my story of the Mailu people truly, as I have tried to do, the reader will be able to say, perhaps better than I, what is the religion of these people. I do not mean that I have failed to find religion among these people. On the contrary I have felt for many years that they are permeated with religion; and I would go further and say that the Mailu savage does very little for which he has not received religious sanction. The first answer you get to your query why he does this or that is, "*Usikawowolaa*"—"I am simply doing it." If pressed, his second answer is, "*Gena usiusi*"—"Our custom." Still further pressed and his answer is, "*Gena abai iva omana usiusi eidema*"—"The custom of our fathers."

Then is ancestral custom the only sanction sought and acted upon for all they do? I think not. I think it accounts for their ritual, but it is not their religion.

Nor do I think that, because these people possess so much ritual connected with death, mourning and burial, and apparently think it vital to keep on good terms with the spirits of the departed, therefore they are ancestor worshippers. It seems to me that that is merely a department. Ritual is also observed at initiation, it is observed at marriage, in planting food, in chopping down a forest tree, in procuring and disposing of wealth, in making a pot, at the tying up of canoes, in the use of certain nets, in the consecration of certain individuals, stones or erections, and in endless ceremonials and tabus. Our custom of asking a blessing before food is on a par with the Mailu man's *uura*—spell or prayer—which in the end is nearly always directly or indirectly connected with the food quest.

We have seen the Mailu man and woman at normal work—canoe-making, clay-getting, pot-making, netting,

sail-weaving and sewing, mat-making, fishing and cooking, etc.—and we have seen the same man on his abnormal days—days which make him think, as far as he is allowed to; face to face with bereavement, when he has lost what has been practically a part of himself; starting a home life of his own by public union with one of the other sex; in sacred seclusion, when the boy is ritualistically told that he is naked, and issues forth into man's estate; in bodily pain and suffering, when the natural activities of the body are gone from him and the machinery which he knows nothing about is clogged and unresponsive; in the dance and festival, when every sense of his body is quickened and allowed to run riot—these are abnormal days; we call them the crises in life, the days when the native has to face the unknown.

Their ancestors knew these days as well as they. Religion has evolved as a " tone " (I borrow the term from Crawley's wonderful work, *The Tree of Life*) among them, trying to blend the normal with the abnormal for the perpetuation of the good or the best known to them that shall work for the maintenance of life and the well-being of the community.

In spite of all his tabus, in spite of the lurking evil of the sorcerer, in fact in spite of everything, it would be unfair to the native to think of him as going about his daily tasks with some ghost always dogging his steps. He moves as a free man because he is the willing slave of the community's conscience, and as long as he does not offend that he is care-free.

Like you or me, the healthy savage tries to make the most, even the best, of life—not our idea of " best," but his. To accomplish this " best " he tries by tabus to control the abnormal, or supernatural, with magic, and to discipline himself lest any act of his might bring about the abnormal.

I think that magic in its black and malignant form is an abuse of the legitimate desire to get into touch with the mystic power behind the normal. The sorcerer is the prince of devils in the community. It seems to me that savage society only tolerates him because it has been persuaded that, as he can bring evil into the community, so likewise he is the only one who knows its antidote. Sorcery is practised with ulterior motives to gain power, influence, and material wealth.

The "spell" also, probably the earliest form of magic, I cannot but think of as prayer in embryo. Apart from the spell, practical magic is ineffective either for good or bad.

We have seen that the Mailu man believes in his "spirit part," that the soul of a man leaves his other part at death and enters into, and becomes a part of, the beyond; that the place of habitation of such "spirit parts" has been revealed to men by dreams and "mediums"; that the villages in the other world are the same as these, that the same work is engaged in, and the same village "scraps" take place. Apparently there is no further death there; briefly it seems to be a "carrying on."

We have seen how things and persons become sacred by tabu. Certain food is tabu to certain individuals as a recognition of the sacredness of the oath, as it were, to maintain the secrecy of his spell. Sago for the festival is sacred; it is hung up, tons of it, under the eaves of the houses. That it is distributed when uneatable is of no consequence; there is just as much pride taken in its distribution; no one seems to expect that it would be good sago. Sometimes I feel this sago must be sacrificial. It is consecrated, I think, not to any ancestral spirit but to that something, that force, that feeling which wants to be satisfied that the community is "carrying on." For there is a spiritual prompting, which bids the native carry on, just as our friends say to us, "Carry on!" To quote again from Mr Marett, "the function of religion is to restore confidence."

The Mailu *Govi* festival, the biggest social event in the calendar of the community, is not only a spirit feast for the final departure of the spirit into the realm of spirits, but is one of those sacred reminders to "carry on," which the subconscious mind of the community demands for its existence. New inspiration is imparted to every branch and function of the social life, and thereby to the individual life also. To this end the cooking-stone given to the master is made sacred; the platform of the ceremonial dancer is likewise consecrated; the sacrificial dreamer must remain in his sacred loneliness; the spell uttered at the erection of the signs for the festival includes what we must call a prayer for the awakening of sexual functions. The sacred *ailopulopu* pole on the platform of one *Govi* festival must form

the material for the first fire about the sacred stone, made in preparation for the next similar festival. There must be no unbroken chain. All that is vital to life and capable of carrying on the well-being of the whole is religiously emphasized and ritualistically expressed.

Though "they worship they know not what," without religious impulse our Mailu savages are so many lost individuals.

The common temple of the Mailu man is the sanctuary of the community's heart. The ritual of his worship is in the ceremonial with which he meets the crises in life and satisfies himself that all is well. His religion is an at-one-ement in the sense that it is an attempt to reconcile the normal to the abnormal and establish a spirit of contentment for the full enjoyment of life.

CHAPTER XXXII

Some Trips Inland among the Dimuga & Some Personal Experiences

ON a clear day or after a thunderstorm inland in the afternoon the view of the mountains across the six miles of water separating Mailu from the mainland takes a lot of beating, and the roughness of the country with its peopled peaks has always had a great fascination for me.

To some the call of the wild must always appeal, and the lure of parts unknown. But unfortunately the demands on one's time, spent so much in regular monotonous hours of school and the strenuous duties of a head station, leave few opportunities for the more attractive occupation of pioneering.

My first trip inland was made in 1901, when I made my first acquaintance with the Mailu-speaking people of the hill-tops of Delebai (two villages) and then with Udama, the metropolis of the Dimuga people.

Udama was visited first by that capable Government officer, Mr Armitt, father of Mr Armitt now in the Department of Native Affairs. It is about ten miles in from the coast. The climb up to Delebai was exhausting enough, but we had to drop down again to near sea-level on the other side, cross a stretch of well-watered flat land densely covered with lofty tropical forest trees, and then climb the Udama hill, from 1500 to 2000 feet high, by a path that seemed to suggest that the people had chosen the most impossible way of ascent to their village. I suspect, though, that it was about the best.

When we got into the village we found only a handful of old people, some women, and a few children. As the result of long trading relationships with the coastal Mailu they could understand the Mailu language. The men were out making sago and were expected back that day. The village was divided into two sections, one situated higher up than the other, though there was no artificial boundary mark.

There was practically no earth on the street between the two rows of houses, ill-made and worse kept. Great rocks and boulders adorned the street. Under the houses some rose so high that they were used as supports for the bearers and joists. The gimlet-snouted pigs were getting their afternoon meal at the hands of the women. It seemed as if both pigs and man were afraid to leave the village precincts to satisfy nature's demands. It reeked everywhere—in the street, under the houses, on the rocks! Everywhere there was filth.

The ordinary houses along either side of the ridge were built on top of the steep slope of the hill, so that their fronts along the street were on short posts, while the back posts went far down. They had low roofs of sago-leaf and low walls covered with the wide butt-ends of the leaf midrib of the sago or fan palm. The long sides of the houses faced the street instead of the ends, as in Mailu villages.

On subsequent visits I entered these houses and found them partitioned inside with a low barricade, or sometimes by a pole tied down, to indicate the divisions for different families. Along the street side ran a narrow verandah, floored, as were also the interiors, with split palm fastened on similar strips, which in turn were bound to the joists.

In each of the two sections of the village was a club-house for men and boys (*dubu*). These two buildings were built more on the pattern of Mailu houses and raised on much higher posts than the ordinary houses; they stood in the middle of the street and consisted of two platforms, with a wide verandah in front of the lower platform. They were floored with adzed boards and each platform had two fire-places let into the floor. As in the Mailu houses, the thatch came down to just below the upper platform. One was called Banaga, I forget the name of the other.

The view all round was surpassingly beautiful. The mist was just gathering in caps upon the great mountains; to the east, over miles of flat land with swamp and sago, one looked right away to the shores of Orangerie Bay, across that stretch of water and still in a direct line of vision to a narrow strip of land, then to the wide expanse of Mullens Harbour, and right up the Sagarai valley to the hills of the Buhutu people. The sea to southward could not be seen as

the coast range cut it off. To the north-west and west was range after range of hills and mountains, crowned by Mounts Suckling and Clarence, behind Cloudy Bay. Yet in the midst of all this breeze-swept grandeur on turning round you were met by the nauseating smell of betel-nut saliva and human dirt.

About five o'clock there was a slight rustle in the village, and over the north-east corner I saw the men and boys returning with their sago. Everyone was supplied with spears and shield as a protection against attack, for the sago swamp was frequently chosen as the place of attack by hostile communities. I went out to greet the headman, always distinguishable, and on this occasion leading his people into the village. He took no notice of me whatsoever; his face expressed entire indifference if it expressed anything at all.

They hastily put down their bundles of sago, wrapped in leaves, on the filthy verandahs of the different houses, and went straight for their respective *dubus*, where they placed their spears and shields, and then began talking, apparently never to finish. The headman courteously came and pointed out the *dubu* in which I might put my things and sleep.

The hubbub of voices became indescribable. The Dimuga speech is exceedingly rapid and consists of many shut, monosyllabic words. We got a bit of food and returned into the *dubu*, out of the damp mist. I had eight Mailu boys with me. Six of them were cute enough to go off to the other *dubu*. Two stuck by me, taking up positions, one on either side, to guard our stuff.

Two fires were lit. The place became well-nigh intolerable with smoke, the thickness of the atmosphere, and noise. How they heard what anyone said, I do not know. The frequenters of both club-houses swarmed into mine (where, of course, there was foreigner's tobacco). They chewed betel-nut and squirted out the thick red saliva from their mouths into the fireplace—for some this seemed hardly wide enough—or between the cracks in the floor—these were never wide enough—and smoked tobacco from bamboo pipes without a pause. At first they started on their own native stuff, true tobacco-leaf, which they held over the fire for a short time to dry, then rolled up in another leaf into a

cigarette form, and then stuck into the hole of the pipe, which was passed round to each in turn. Amid the indescribable babel of voices this seemed to continue all night. I was not conscious of having slept a wink, and yet my tin of private tobacco, which I kept under my arm, was empty when the first streaks of dawn were announced.

What made things worse was the continual screaming throughout the night of a young child in one of the women's houses close by. I learned afterwards that this woman would not allow the child to sleep while I was there, lest some calamity might befall its *iau*, or spirit, after it left the body in sleep.

My boys were anxious to buy betel-nut there, but my head boy came to me at daylight suggesting that we go back at once, as the people were getting nasty about the price offered for their betel-nut. They wanted to clear us out of our stock of trade tobacco, with which we would have to buy our food on the return journey.

We made some excuse about pressing needs demanding our quick return home, and left Udama, having established, in spite of everything, very friendly relationships.

At the bottom of Udama hill, in the lovely clean water of a mountain stream, I had one of the bathes of my life.

After frequent visits to Udama and some of the villages round about it, and after visiting all the Bogea villages (at that time separated), whose people are not true Papuans like the Dimuga, but have intermarried apparently for many generations with the eastern-coast Mailu, I made the farthest trip inland I had so far taken.

There was to be a great "feast" at two adjacent Dimuga villages in the main range. An Udama friend promised to let me know the appointed time for going in. He and ten coast men, one of whom understood the Dimuga language, conducted me. We slept the first night at Doeamari, the new village of the Udama people, who had come down to the river bank and made a village nearer their gardens. They have since gone up again on to the top of Udama hill. The next morning we were a big party. A crowd of the strongest of the Udama women, laden with string bags of food, followed the crowd of Udama men who joined us. Compared with the women, the men travelled

light indeed. We spent two nights on the bank of the Imdara river, one branch of the river that flows into Amazon Bay. We had to wait there for the Iauguriguri people, who were giving one of the *dauge* dances at the feast, for they could not catch the pigs they owed and had to repay at the feast. I slept in a yam hut on a yam mattress! My boys slept under the hut on leaves spread over saplings; the garden was on the slope of the hill. Our Dimuga friends stayed in the low ground by the river.

In the night there was an awful yell from down below and in a few moments we heard the women's screeching voices and saw that torches were lit and were being carried about everywhere. We were just at the spot where one of the Laua warpaths crosses the stream, and the people had all got the Laua on their nerves. In those early days we were continually hearing about the Laua and their deeds. But we found that the disturbance came from an old man, who dreamed he saw his deceased brother's spirit jumping on one of the poor tied pigs and, afraid that the spirit was going to charm it away, woke up and screamed!

I was rewarded for trying to be patient during our delay by finding a tree used as a dancing tree by the bird-of-paradise at mating time. I and the boy with me lay on our backs under the tree and watched the delightful performance. The hen birds, fussy and restless, hopped about on the top branches; the male birds, never seeming to rest a moment from their excitement, assembled from time to time on the lower branches near the main trunk, with wings outspread, so that the wonderful, long, light, feathery appendages from under the wings might stream behind and show up to advantage; they danced in quick, short, jerky steps outwards along the branches, while the ladies on top, more restless than ever, flapped their wings and squawked their monotonous and noisy squawk. All flew off time after time, only to return and go through the whole performance again. One bird, generally a hen, returned first on each occasion and noisily recalled the others.

The main body of Dimuga people intended keeping to the stream, and our guide, my boys and I left them in order that we might climb up and see as many villages as possible. One afternoon from the top of Gowena we saw the coast-line

for miles east and west. The beauty of the surroundings was indescribable. The lichen on the tree branches along the upward path made them appear twice their size and we walked silently on deep moss. The village on the summit consisted of two family houses only, and no *dubu*. It was just a sub-clan of the Kenene section of the Dimuga people, whose big village, Unagama, then capped a high bluff which divides the Tavani river into two streams. Moiaro, the "father" of that section, was a delightful old man, and would have been still more so had the houses of his village been cleaner. He recommended us to walk farther round the ridge till we came to a new village on a new site (Elo). This we did, though sorry to leave Moiaro. A month afterwards he suffered the loss of his village, his two daughters-in-law and one of his sons at the hands of the Laua, who set fire to the houses at night and speared those who tried to escape. The walk round to Elo was along a deep moss-grown track in the shade of glorious forest trees. Strangely enough there was little bird life to be seen—in fact it has always struck me that the nearer the coast the greater the variety and quantity of bird life. It was bitterly cold at Elo with the breeze coming off the nine thousand feet of Mount Simpson. We were glad of fires that night. There was a new *dubu* too, and as most of the young bucks had already set out for Degamu, we had a delightfully clean and quiet night and were well fed by those left behind. I had noticed cane hung down in loops round the fireplaces of these inland *dubus*, and that afternoon the old fellows who had been down in their gardens all day, and, like ourselves, had climbed that Gowena mountain, threw themselves on their backs as soon as they got into the *dubu* and placed their feet through the loops so that they could suspend them in the smoke of the smouldering fire. I did the same, and if anybody climbs Gowena to Elo, I recommend him to do likewise.

They also brought with them small bunches of leaves. I found them to be a variety of nettle, green on the face and dark red underneath. The men rubbed them gently on their legs and thighs. Like our nettles they brought out little raised lumps. I got them to try it on me as an experiment. It was agony at first, but after a while it became a most refreshing sensation.

On this trip I saw these leaves used universally among the mountain Dimuga, and I have seen the same since. They say that they came originally from Gowena and that they have planted them now in their gardens everywhere. Once I suggested their use to a Government officer with whom I was travelling. After a few moments' application he talked! But I cannot put here what he said. If at first he thought I was pulling his leg he afterwards graciously acknowledged the invigorating effect of the stinging.

The early morning view from Elo was wonderful—nothing but a wide expanse of white down with black peaks sticking up here and there, and the massive heads of Simpson, Dayman and Suckling waking up with the morning and gazing down over the huge white blanket. As the sun rose, this rolled itself up the valleys and steep slopes, and went to veil the midday faces of these monsters of the chain.

The headman at Elo, apparently with no effort, called across to Moawa to say we were coming that day. It took us till three in the afternoon to get there. The descent into the narrow valley bottom seemed endless, but still more so the ascent on the other side. At Moawa I found the best sugar-cane I had seen or tasted. To get to Degamu from Moawa meant going down to the stream again and climbing along its rocky bed. And then the ascent!

There was no club-house at Degamu. One of the ordinary houses was given us for our accommodation. On a spur of the mountain we found crowds putting on their finery for the dances. These started soon after we got there, and before it got too dark I managed to get a photo of one of the *dauges* in the village street. At first they seemed afraid of the camera, but after being shown some prints, much of their fear vanished. I much enjoyed the native dance music from the men's and boys' voices. I saw no woman take part in any dance. At night, while I stood watching the dances and listening to the melodious voices of the boys, especially the younger ones, Besi, the headman of the village, posted himself just behind my back and never left me. As far as I know this was the first visit of a white man among these people, and they said so themselves. But I put it down with all reserve, for so much of the country has been tramped over by those silent pioneers, the gold prospectors, the story

of whose travels and experiences, though so little known, must be of thrilling interest.

Strangers were there from everywhere, some even from the north-east coast. We exchanged gifts and made friends with as many of the chief men of the principal sections of the Dimuga as were not too shy. There was no hustling.

Besi took me to a sectional village, Nonou, higher than Degamu; the people were a much more treacherous-looking lot, and through an interpreter Besi asked me not to let my boys come there after dark. There, too, was a feast. I could not say how many pigs were slaughtered that day. Death must have been to them a release from suffering, for they had been carried many sore miles upside down, with their legs tied together over a pole and their jaws muzzled with string. Tons of yams were also distributed, and, as far as I could follow what was going on, the distribution was made according to *dubus*.

That night all the chief men with whom we had exchanged gifts came and slept with us! Most of the sections of the Dimuga people were represented. Nora people from the eastern side of Mount Simpson were there, but were too shy, I suppose, to make themselves known, nor could I get any man to introduce me to them.

It was a strange party that met together that evening for our short service of evening prayer. Very few could understand the meaning of what was said, to say nothing of what was done, but there was silence.

I woke in the middle of the night feeling very cold and found that the fire was out. Getting accustomed to the dim moonlight coming through the doorway, I noticed that figures were sitting round the fireplace and heard low whispers. They were my boys. I told them to get fire, and they said that the people would not let them have it. The village was quite quiet. I suspected that they had been up to Nonou. They had. And through the one boy who understood the language they had heard something they did not like. I asked where Dui was, our Udama guide. "At Nonou," they replied. They told me they had gone to Nonou against my instructions and had heard men speaking about an attack to be made on our party at dawn by the Nora and some other people.

I would not believe them and woke up Besi to hear their yarn. Besi told them to go to sleep, as nothing could happen to our party while our new-made friends were sleeping in the same house. I found that my boys had already taken my shot-gun and loaded both barrels, also my little repeating rifle for shooting pigs and wallaby. They evidently intended to look after themselves. I had the guns unloaded, we got fire again, and I was soon asleep.

In the morning I noticed that my things had been packed before I woke and that the Udama crowd had already cleared out.

After a cup of tea we set off homewards. We took the river track, and by midday found that we had to make all possible haste, as rain was setting in. After rain these rivers, though ordinarily small, come down in great torrents over the rocks and boulders and tear everything before them. On the third day after leaving Degamu we got down to the coast, tired, dirty and sore.

A month after this Laua raided some of the villages with sad effect.

The Nora people made their first visit to the coast and brought us a pig they carried all the way. They got a suitable present in return. I am sorry I have never been in to Nora. It has since been visited by the Government. At one of our schools we now have fifteen little Nora children, whom I examined for the first time not long ago.

We reported the Laua raids on the peaceful Dimuga and a Government officer eventually went in to Laua, and as they were actually then on a raiding expedition was fortunate enough to get there without their knowing that he was in the vicinity. They practically walked into his arms at their own village. This officer, Mr Bell, now Administrator of Native Affairs, wrote the best possible description of Laua village in the Government gazette of the time. My visit to Laua was subsequent to Mr Bell's, and I am afraid my description must pale before his.

The old Laua village (it is now on the right bank of one arm of the Bailebo river) was situated behind Deba, which again was behind Magori. I reckon that Laua was ten to twelve miles in from the coast, at the eastern end of Table Bay.

We chose the river track, and crossed and recrossed the river seventeen times. The great limestone hill on which Laua was situated lay back from the river, and to reach it we passed through beautiful dense flat forest land.

Much of the hill consisted of perpendicular cliff honeycombed with gruesome-looking caves and huge fissures.

From the level we made a fairly gradual ascent till the cliffs were reached, where we entered into a passage with smooth rock on both sides towering high above our heads. On either side of the passage were dark narrow caves; the end was abrupt and sticks were put zigzag fashion to afford a stairway up on to the higher rocks. The remainder of the way was rock-climbing. Poised over huge dark fissures were masses of rock within an inch or two of the edges. It looked as if a push would send them hurtling to the bottom.

The houses were built over similar chasms, forty or fifty feet deep, and from one part or one house to another one had to cross fissures on bridges of a single sapling.

The fissures were not wide, but for a booted man were awkward to cross. I presume that Laua mothers in those days possessed no nerves, or that some extra providential supervision presided over the welfare of little children there. The soles of the Laua men's feet must indeed be hard, to tackle continually the sharp-pointed crags. The Laua people themselves are a weedy lot, and seem to me like a people dying out through long lack of friendly neighbours with whom healthily to intermarry. They possess little of the physique of the Dimuga, with whom I am glad to say they are now beginning to intermarry.

When I was at old Laua I saw that in some instances pigs were in the same houses as the people.

Their language bears no resemblance to that of the Dimuga, but many strong resemblances to Mailu in vocabulary, except that, unlike Mailu, it is much aspirated.

Bedila Guina.—One day in 1904, when visiting Dalava in the middle of Table Bay, I got the Dalava men to take me through the immense deep swamp about eight miles in from the coast. We walked the eight miles over low good alluvial soil to the left bank of the river known at the coast as Ovesa, and inland as Bedila. Ouma village was on the opposite bank. The river was running rapidly, and as we

could get no reply to our calling, a couple of our men swam across, hoping to find a canoe. They called to us that there were no people or canoes in the village.

At last they found one tiny old canoe without an outrigger. With a log they fixed up an outrigger somehow, made paddles with a couple of coconut-leaf midribs, and took us across, one by one, in the cranky, leaky little vessel. After a short time the Ouma people appeared round the bend of the river in their canoes, returning from sago-making, with all their weapons and shields for protection. We borrowed one of the canoes and paddled up-stream. There were great trees on either side, and hanging from the high branches in festoons right down to the water were scarlet masses of D'Albertis creeper. The brilliant sun striking these gorgeous flowers turned the water bright red with their reflection.

Soon we came out into a wide expanse of water covered with weed and water-lilies, except where the main stream ran through and made an open lane. Thousands of dead hardwood (*bedila*) trees with their bare spreading branches were standing up out of the water. The trees of softer wood had long since rotted and fallen. Wherever trunks or branches showed above the surface, they were covered from end to end with a line of water-fowls of every description, from wild geese to ducks and tiny divers.

It was difficult to imagine that under what looked like a lawn dotted with flowers was about three feet of water and under that no one knows how many feet of soft mud. Our pole was easily driven in for four or five feet.

In the middle of the clear flowing waterway we could not touch bottom with the sixteen-foot pole. The stream wound this way and that, and it interested me more than anything to discover the tops of hardwood house-posts about a foot below the surface at the side of the stream, and encircling these the tops of the hardwood stockade of a village once on the bank. The house-posts were unmistakable, as they were carved some distance down and cut out at the top to take the plates. The general curve of the remaining stockade posts indicated what they had been. The old people at Dalava told me that a village once stood there, called Goilamari.

Here and there in this great swamp were small islands with sago-palms on them. I think that these parts were the haunts of the people living at the back of Cloudy Bay, who not long ago betrayed some of the native constabulary from Abau, cruelly murdered four, and took their arms and ammunition. For a considerable time under their leader they held the Government at bay in this swamp, to which they ran and with every part of which they seemed familiar. I think that the swamp has been caused by the sinking of the land, and this seems to be borne out by the fact that the sea is encroaching rapidly upon the neighbouring coast of Table Bay.

A Few Notes.—In a subsequent trip among the Dimuga as guest of the Government Assistant Magistrate of the District, I visited all their western villages and found that this people and their language extended right up to the divide in the main range, between Mounts Simpson and Dayman. Except that there were practically no *dubus*, the villages differed in no way from the other villages of the Dimuga. They were situated on the tops of mountains or on spurs overlooking deep precipices and valleys. The Nunu section of the Dimuga seem to prefer to make their gardens in the long grass country, which they dig up for planting with the same kind of digging poles as on Mailu Island. The travelling is very rough indeed. Sometimes the narrow path winds round steep mountain-sides, with nothing but grass to hang on to if a slip is made. In places these paths circle precipitous spurs, with only a tiny rock ledge for the feet and tufts of grass or roots for hand-holds. In such places, while our coast carriers could not balance their burdens, the Dimuga youths who joined our party managed them without any difficulty. Sometimes there was a sheer drop of hundreds of feet. At other times the paths ran along the razor-back ridges of mountains with sudden drops on either side; some of these ridges led steeply down into the valleys, making the going still more difficult. In the valleys the road followed the watercourses, which meant climbing over boulders and jumping from rock to rock or slushing through water again until one's boots became like blotting-paper. Descents into the valleys only meant ascents to mountain-tops again in order to pitch camp near a village.

I shall carry to the end of my days the memory of those delightful evenings, after the work of the day, Government and missionary, was done and we had finished our interviews with natives, and when—both smokers and cheerful companions—we could lie and rest and talk on our camp-beds under the tent flies. The nights were always cold, so also was the water; the atmosphere was clear and bracing, there was freedom from mosquitoes, and our minds were crowded with memories of the surpassing beauty and grandeur through which we had toiled during the day; good-naturedly we chaffed one another over our awkward situations and antics on the road. So much for camp memories.

The cooking of the Dimuga people is nearly always done in pots, and only rarely on hot stones, as is the rule with the people at the back of Cloudy and Baxter bays. At the Dimuga village of Iolae I found in the houses both Mailu and north-coast pottery. The latter was made at Iasiasi and traded into the interior as the Mailu pots were traded in. They formerly used spears and clubs as weapons. The clubs were of stone, generally disc-shaped, with a hole drilled through the centre for the handle. Many years ago I got from the Dimuga people a white stone club of the pineapple design, involving the drilling of a hole nearly four inches long to take the shaft.

I also found that the Dimuga living nearest to the main range used slings and made beautiful little wicker baskets for carrying the stones. Close to the village they had observation platforms in high trees.

The people are mostly short of stature and large of joint. They have broad flat feet, with the great toe standing out at a pronounced angle from the other toes. The hair is short and curly, sticking close to the head. They are much darker-skinned than the coast natives, and the nose is broader, brows are prominent and eyes set far back; the general expression is pleasing, and they are of a cheerful disposition.

The women are very small and very active and apparently possess great staying power. They are even less good-looking than the men—I am afraid this leaves little room for looks at all. "Beasts of burden" can be more aptly applied to them than to the Mailu women. Like the Mailu women

they wear an abundant supply of grass skirts, made from the long rank sword-grass (*nabuna*). The men wear bands of beaten bark twisted into a cord round the waist and drawn through the legs as a complete covering, not as the perineal cord is worn by the Mailu man.

They are more musical, I imagine, than the Mailuans, who possess no other musical instrument than the drum. The Dimuga have a flute (*kobubu*), made from a small species of bamboo. The flute is eighteen inches long. One end is closed by the natural partition, except for a small hole made through the centre. The other, the mouth end, is open. Two holes two inches apart are bored in the side, the lower about three inches from the end.

I am not musical enough to know how many notes they can produce, but those they do produce are sweet and, though soft, can be heard a long way, especially on still evenings and nights, at which times they are mostly used. A Dimuga man told me that youths in love use them to make the girls kindly disposed to them. The note is plaintive and pathetic enough to achieve that end.

The open end is put against the pursed-up lips, drawn to one end of the mouth, and a gentle breath is blown in at an angle. Another method is to place the open end at an angle against one nostril, from which the breath is blown. Different notes are produced by shutting and opening with the fingers the two holes at the side and the one at the end. Besides the flute, the Dimuga have the drum, similar in shape to that of Mailu. They have also a "jews' harp" (jaw harp), which they call *Bagoi*, the name of a village and its hill on the northern side of the divide, where these harps are said to be used a good deal. It is made of a bit of black palm bark flattened out and cut in the form of a large capital "E" with elongated arms; the fingers of the left hand force the top and bottom arms towards the centre one. Through the end of this a hole is drilled through which a string is threaded with a knot at the end. The string is drawn back tight and then round the erect left thumb and the end is held by the right hand. The instrument is held in front of the open mouth and the string jerked by the right hand. Neither lips nor teeth are employed in holding the instrument. There are various styles, but all on the same plan.

The male voices of the Dimuga are very good, and the calls from mountain to mountain or to valley-garden are as thrilling as they are impossible to describe. It is always a marvel to me how the first part is heard; it is raced through at a terrific speed and only the few concluding syllables of the sentence, especially the very last, are intensely emphasized, with a long-drawn-out note at the end, to which every muscle and apparently every part of the man's anatomy contributes.

INDEX

A

ADDRESS, burial, 225
Adze, 40
Affection, family, 47, 64
Age groups, 98
Agencies, 153, 162
Animals of country, 22
Areca-nut, 64
Areca-nut chewing, 64
Arithmetic, 193
Armshell—
  Decoration, 156
  Drills, 155
  Making, 154
  Shells, 153
  Spells, 158
  Trading, 152, 157
  Types, 156
Aroma, 27
Aura, or main clan block, 34

B

BAEVARA, 240
Banana, 88
Bara dance, 263
Barau egi, 267
Barrier reef, 20
Bathing, 54
Bau kiwonai, 239
Bau ogoda, 239
Betel-nut chewing, 64
Betrothal, 79
Birds-of-paradise, 301
Birds, types of, 125
Birth, 95
Biula, 290
Bodily injuries, fear of, 215
Boulders, axe-grinding, 21
Bread-fruit, 88
Bunava, 49
Burial—
  Dressing body for, 225
  Rites, 224

C

CANOES—
  Single (*waona*), 111
    Launching, 115
    Making of, 112
    Ownership of, 111
  Double light (*gebo*), 117
    Steering, 118
  Double light war (*bobore*), 118
  Double heavy sailing (*orou*), 120
    Handling, 139
    Lashing, 132
    Making, 123, 130
    Mast, 135
    Rigging, 135
    Sails, 135-138
Carrying, methods of, 74
Cats' cradle, or *viriaau*, 102
Census, Mailu Island, 144
Ceremonial dress, 55
Chiefs, 34
Childhood, 99
Children, 46
Clay, 21, 144
Club-houses—
  Clan, sub-clan, 33
  Construction of, 35
Communism, 46
Consumption, 218
Cures for illnesses, 214

D

D'ALBERTIS creeper, 307
Damorea, 243
Dances—
  Bara, 263
  Leko, 261
  Mortuary, 243
Danilea, "entered in error," 34
Death, ceremonies after, 231
Decorations, house, 45
Degamu, 303
Dimuga, 308

Divination, 273
Dreams, 284
Dress—
  Men, 55
  Women, 56
Drums, 212
Dubu—
  Club-house, 36, 106
  Sub-clan, 34, 238
Dysentery, 218

E

Ear ornaments, 56
Eating, method of, 63
Eclipse of moon, 195
Enemies, traditional, 208

F

Face-tattooing observances, 61
Fence, pig-, 172
Fight, description of, 201
Fishing—
  Anointing nets, 184
  Bagibagi, 181
  Boni, 182
  Divination, 181, 185
  Dui, 182
  Gauma, 184
  Nets, 179
  Odakori, 181
  Oeata, 182
  Poison, 182
  Saea, 180
  Saea deudeu, 182
  Spear, 187
  Torch, 188
  Ueue, 181
  Waru, 181
  Wopa, 181
"Follies, The," 227
Food, types of, 87
Friendship, sworn, 50

G

Games, children's, 99
Gardens, 172
Gardening, 172
General knowledge of Mailu, 191
Goba, 221
Gobuegi, or chief, 105
Gora, 250, 277
Govi Maduna, 246, 253

H

Haddon, Miss, 102
Hairdressing, 57
Heads, treatment of captured, 105-106
Heavenly bodies, 194
Hornbill, 191
Houses—
  Building of, 39
  Construction of, 38
Hunting—
  Alligators, 179
  Birds, 179
  Divination, 176
  Methods of, 176
  Nets, 176
  Orooro-egi, 177
  Pig, 176
  Wallaby, 178

I

Illness, 214
Initiation, boys', 106
Initiation dance (*Lua*), 109
Instruments, musical, 310
Isigoina, 50
Ivari, ordinary perineal band, 108

J

Jealousy, 72

K

Kanare, 254
Karaveni, a traditional female sorceress of the East, 215
Killing song, or *mao*, 107
Knife, bamboo, 204

L

Land, holding of, 35
Lava, 305
Leko dance, 261
Love songs, 79

M

Maa Damadama, 240
Maduna dubus, 35
Magi, 18
Magic, 267
Maila, ceremonial perineal band, 108
Mailu, 18, 19
Maisi, 24
Mao, song after killing, 107

Marriage bond, 85
Massacre dirge, or *moragobu*, 105
Massim, 17
Meals, 49, 62
Medicine-man (*vara egi*), 95, 97, 267
Mediums, 289
Model canoes, 101
Moge, or torch-fishing, 66-67
Moon, customs to do with, 194
Moragobu, the night-long dirge after a successful massacre, 105
Mortuary dance, men's and women's, 243
Mortuary feasts, 238
Moru, 241
Mourners, 223, 227
Mourning, 229
Music, 310

N

NAMES, 98
Name-avoidance, 51
Names of canoes, 141
Nose-sticks, 59

O

OARS, 140
Oio, 242, 246
Origin of Mailu people, legend of, 196
Origin of sailing canoes, 197
Ornaments, 558-561
Ornaments, warrior's, 204
Orooro-egi, 177
Ownership of canoes, 111, 141

P

PAPUASIANS, 17
Papuo-Melanesians, 17
Parents, 46
Perineal bands, 108
Physical characteristics—
  Aroma, 27
  Mailu, 25
  Massim, 28
Physical features of coast, 20
Pipe-smoking, 63
Planting, order of, 173
Pools, dangerous, 286
Pottery—
  Clay, 144
  Digging, 145
Pottery—*continued*
  Making, 147
  Patterns, 149
Presents, betrothal, 81
Presents, marriage, 81

R

REEF, 189
Reef, barrier, 20
Reflection in water, 218, 286
Religion, 293
Replacing teeth in skull, 240
Rites, burial, 223, 238

S

SAGO, 88
Sago legend, 197
Sandpaper, 57
Sanitary arrangements, 32
Seasons, 66
Seligman, Dr, 17
Shaking sickness, 290
Shaving, 62
Shields, types of, 202
Siriri egi, leader of the *moragobu*, 105
Skirt, woman's, making of, 57
Skirts, type of, 58
Smoking, 63
Songs—
  Adzing sago, 91-92
  Dugong (children's), 101
  "Follies," 228
  Hair-combing, 80
  Hide-and-seek, 102
  Lifting net, 186
  Love, 79
  Ororo (after raid), 206
  Pulling, 127
  Sago, 91
  Shuttlecock, 102
Sorcerer (*barau egi*), 267
Souls, 287
Spears, types of, 201
Spells (*uura*), 169
  Ancestor, 259
  Armshell, 158
  Before a raid, 205
  Burial, 224
  Canoe-sweeping, 259
  Comfort, 65
  Cooking-stone, 247

Spells—*continued*
Cure of sickness, 216
Departure, 159
Erecting *gora*, 250
Healing, 270
Husking betel-nut, 256
Kneading, 92
Perineal band, 108
Sago, 89
Sweeping, 249
Tabu, 270
Spirits, tree, 122
Stars, 195
Steering of canoes, 118
Stone, *Ilara*, 246
Stone implements, 21
Suckling, period of, 98
Sugar-cane, 174
Sweeping charm, 65

T

TABU, 276
Taro, 88
Tattoo marks, 57, 59, 61
Tattooing pigment, 61
Tau, legend of, 165
Thatching, 44
Tides, 68
Time, measure of, periods of, 53
Tobacco, 63
Torch-fishing, 66, 188
Torea, 240
Trade trips, 164
Trap, pig, 175
Tree, method and ceremony of felling, 122

U

UDAMA, 297

V

VAILALA madness, 288
Vara egi, 267
Veveni, 48
Village, Mailu, arrangement of, 30
Village, plan of, 30

W

WAILING for the dead, 222
Waking, 284
War-cries, 202
Warfare, methods of, 205
Water supply, Mailu Island, 33
Wealth, measurement of, 194
Weapons, 201-204
Weddings, 82
Widowers, 233
Women's duties, 72
Women's wealth, 168

Y

YAM, 88

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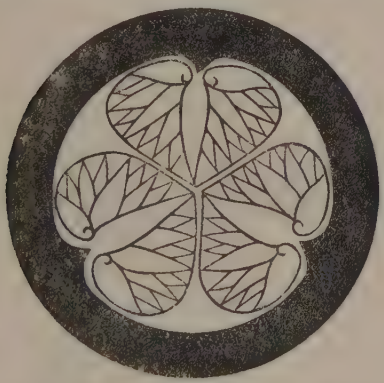
Formerly Secretary of the British Legation at Tokio.



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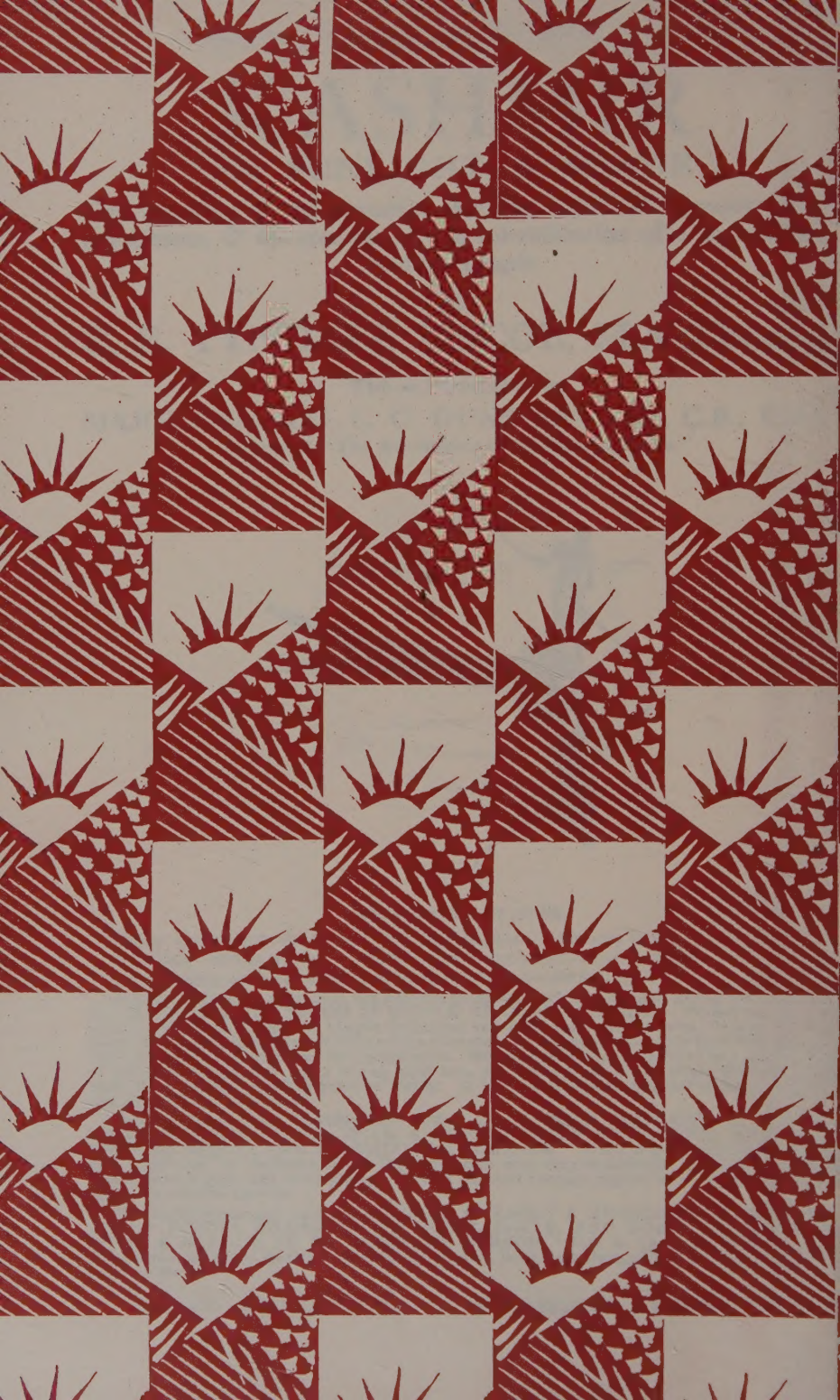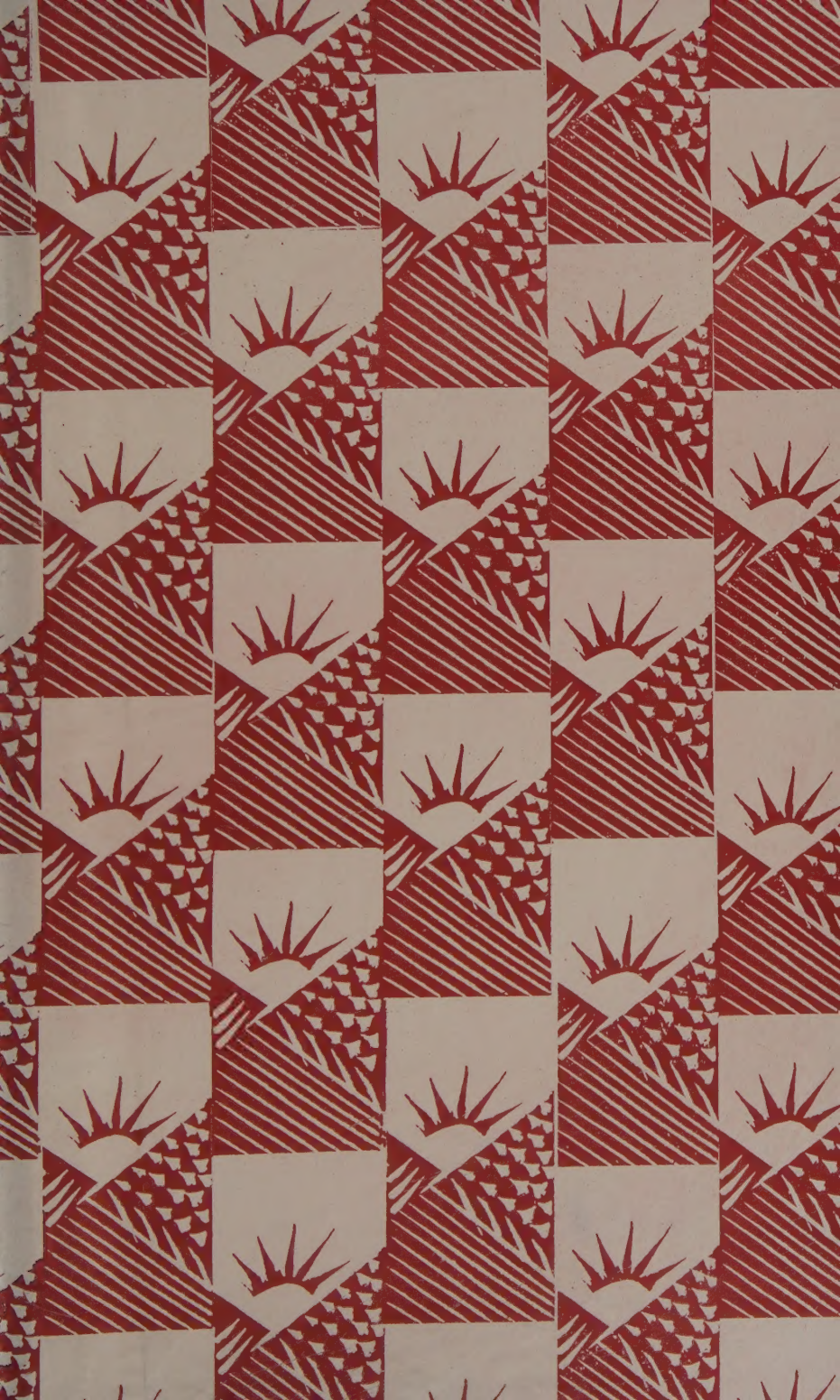
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